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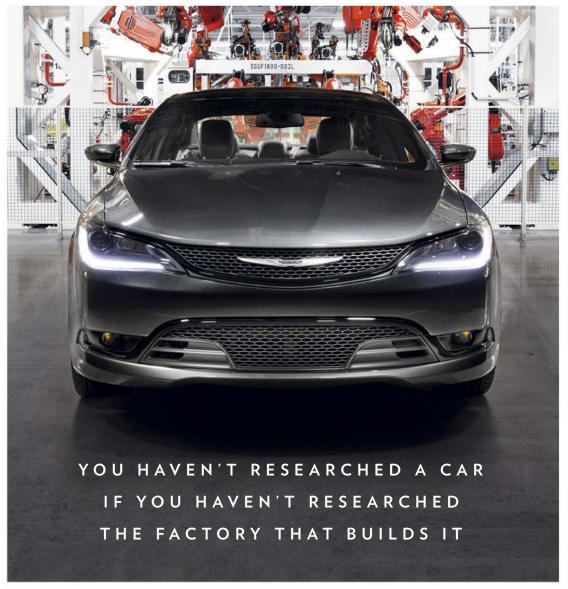
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FEATURE

2015 Performance
Car of the Year

14 contenders made it to
our second annual PCOTY
shootout. Only one could
take the crown.
BY JACK BARITH

ALFA ROMEO 4C BMW M235i BMW M3 CHEVROLET CAMARO Z/28 DODGE CHALLENGER SRT HELLCAT DODGE VIPER SRT TA FERRARI 458 SPECIALE FORD MUSTANG GT

JAGUAR F-TYPE R COUPE LEXUS RC F NISSAN GT-R NISMO PORSCHE 911 GT3 SUBARU WRX STI **VOLKSWAGEN GOLF GTI**





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lexus.com/RCF | #LexusRCF









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EDITOR'S LETTER

by LARRY WEBSTER



he nightmare came as I crested the hill: a single police cruiser in the parking lot of a smalltown church, along with a Ferrari, a Dodge Viper, and a smattering of the other performance cars from our drive group. As I

watched the officer exit his car, my heart sank. This was the first day of our weeklong look at the year's best fast cars, and it appeared we were all about to pay the price.

R&T's Performance Car of the Year is a fantastic test, but it's not without challenges. Our initial casting call included every new car with sporting intent that was released or revised over the past year, plus one or two stragglers that will be available by year's end. That early list, a whopping 30 machines, was pared down through months of argument and pretesting.

The process was far from easy, but some edits at least came quickly. The latest iteration of the BMW M3 is really two models, the two-door M4 and the four-door M3. They're mechanically identical, but we went with the M3 because everyone here is a sucker for heritage and name recognition. This year's new Porsches included GTS versions of the Boxster and Cayman, the 911 Targa, and the 911 GT3. An argument could be made to include all of them, but the GTS is largely a new package for existing performance options, and between the Targa and the GT3, we all felt the latter had the best chance at the crown.

Then came the debate over how to handle the Ferrari LaFerrari, McLaren P1, and Porsche 918 hybrids. These cars are categorically insane: Each has a million-dollar price and makes nearly 1000 hp. The discussion reminded everyone involved of the central point of PCOTY: If the task was to pick the highest-performing car, we'd simply look at our test results and choose the winner from a

spreadsheet. But there's more to a great car than sheer velocity.

PCOTY focuses on the experience. Speed is critical, but it's only part of the equation—a fast car that doesn't grab you emotionally is a novelty, while one that does is worth hanging on to for life. PCOTY is half engineering, half lust—which car makes our knees wobble, and given the choice, which would we pick to hump to a track day 600 miles away?

The process contains a bit of nuance. We purposely keep the award a little loose and fluid, to accommodate the subtle trends that change from year to year. And then we layer on a consideration of the value that each car delivers for its price, no matter how high the sticker.

Which brings me back to the million-dollar trio. They're cost-no-object science experiments; I love that they exist and respect what they do, but for our purposes, they felt too removed from the more earthly cars we wanted to celebrate. So we made a tough call and left the hybrid hypercars out.

As it happened, we had more than enough exotic speed on hand. The refreshed Viper TA is ferocious, and the Ferrari 458 Speciale's wail could literally be heard for miles. Nissan's GT-R Nismo remains quick enough to humble

The police car parked next to the Ferrari and Viper...at a church...and it looked like we'd all have to pay the price.

established supercars yet seems to have finally gained a heart. All three of these cars, and the GT3, broke the lap record at our home track.

Then there were the surprises, the machines that delight despite modest origins. The brightest example is the VW GTI, a stunningly entertaining yet practical and affordable hatchback. Ford's new Mustang, I'm happy to report, still feels like a Mustang—big rumbly motor and a slightly hairy chassis—yet it confidently hustles on a lumpy back road. Ford gave the car poise without sacrificing its character.

By the time I met the cop at that church, we had whittled our list to 14 cars. We drove them everywhere, from twisty roads to wide-open interstates. The logistics took months of planning, and the idea of it falling apart on the first day was terrifying. I pulled in and watched the officer's body language. Our crew stood there, next to the cars, looking at their shoes. Then I saw the cop's smile, and the universal car-guy gesture of turning an imaginary steering wheel. It turned out that our test team had done as instructed, saving the limit driving for the track. The officer just wanted to get close to the cars. I understand the impulse.



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Letters to ROAD & TRACK

BARUTH TOOK TRACK-DAY COACHING TO TASK. TRACK-DAY COACHES RETURNED THE FAVOR.







Dear R&T,

Jack Baruth got a lot wrong in "On the Brink" [September 2014]. To start, marque clubs have used in-car instruction since before the Nineties. That was the norm when I started doing Porsche Club of America track events in 1974. Next, clubs like PCA and BMWCCA have instituted instructor training to help with the skills required to be in the right seat. I am sure others have addressed this need as well. Baruth makes no mention of these programs. And, lastly, when you look at the number of high-performance driving events (HPDEs) held across the country, I would say the safety record for on-track instruction is exemplary compared with just driving down the highway. I think Baruth completely misrepresented HPDEs, the facts, and the training efforts already provided to make track days enjoyable and safe.

ALAN KENDALL, Dawsonville, Georgia

As a past instructor for the PCA, I can relate to the article regarding the lack of proper driving instruction for on-track activities. The worst mishaps I ever saw were those by trainers themselves, driving their own cars in their run groups. "Driving over his head" was a common utterance. I quickly quashed any of my students' notions that driving as fast as possible is the ultimate goal: Safety trumps everything, always. It is a shame so many instructors not only lose sight of that but aren't really taught the skills to coach properly in the first place. Driving well yourself and teaching others to drive well can be two different exercises.

MICHAEL BALEY, Mount Joy, Pennsylvania

Baruth managed to, in one fell swoop, insult just about every HPDE teacher in existence. Saying that "too many 'instructors' . . . aren't up to the task" and "many are just doing it to save money on entry fees" is at best ignorant and at worst insulting. Ken Novinger was, and his co-workers still are, some of the bravest, kindest, most generous, and most

knowledgeable folks I've met in my 17 years of driving at Summit Point Raceway. The reward they seek for their time is the moment when it finally "clicks" for novice students and they graduate to faster groups. The same can be said for HPDE instructors across the country, I'm sure. I don't understand why Baruth doesn't acknowledge that, since he's an HPDE instructor himself.

JASON VAN PATTEN, Oak Hill, Virginia

Baruth responds: I'm glad this article has started a conversation about instructor safety. As Mr. Van Patten notes, I have worked as a driver coach for the past nine years. My primary goal in doing so has been to ensure the safety of my students and fellow instructors. That objective is best served when we talk frankly and openly about the risks of in-car instruction, and what we can do to reduce risk. It's often uncomfortable and difficult to address these issues, but failing to do so doesn't fix them. It merely ensures that the next generation of driver coaches will be no safer or better qualified than we are.

SMITHOLOGY, SMITHISTORY

Call me a dreamer, but I believe there is a place for BMW to make a car like the E30 M3 again. Who doesn't like a car that is fatigue-free and handles like an indoor go-kart? What made the production version sell like cold toast was the one thing that was the most compromised: horsepower. Everyone knows speed sells. The newer M3s prove this. I just wish the latest version were more like the E30, analog and progressive.

JOSEPH VALENTINO, Austin, Texas

"I'd go back in time and spend a season racing in Europe between 1960 and 1973, then die happy." Sam Smith, you don't know how right you are! I kind of did that a couple times and it was . . . I don't know, just a real sport or something. Driving from the Targa to the Ring to Spa on consecutive weekends in the "race car"—my street Lancia Flaminia Zagato 3C. Running up to Lake Como and staying at Count Lurani's villa while he arranged a drive for me at the Monza Formula Junior Grand Prix. Having a drink at a Le Mans hotel with Bill Gavin. But I felt like I was having too much fun, so I came home. With the car, of course.

ANATOLY ARUTUNOFF, Tulsa, Oklahoma

Arutunoff is one of the world's most accomplished gentleman racers. He turned laps with Gurney and Ginther, witnessed the final Mille Miglia, and built his own 1.8-mile road course in Oklahoma, so the 3C-Lurani-Monza-Gavin yarn is probably true. Which is excellent. Sam, like the rest of us, is jealous.

BLUEGRASS BRUTE

If there are any of those AEV Brutes left over, send them down to eastern Kentucky. We could use them to pull coal trucks out of ditches, and they'd be great for hauling moonshine.

NEAL HAMMON, Shelbyville, Kentucky

Sorry, Neal, we stopped lending out Brutes after we sent one up of Rocky Top, looking for a moonshine still. That rig never came down; reckon it never will.

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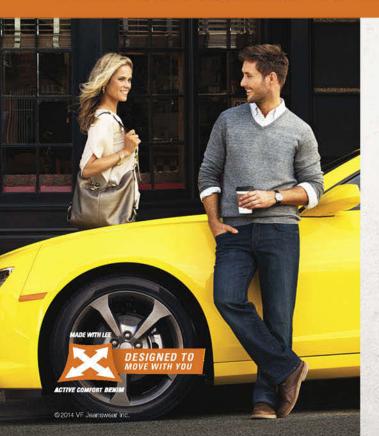
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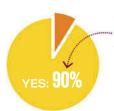
Fuel for the Driven Life [R&T:01:2015] EDITED BY JOSH CONDON





SURVEY SAYS...

IN THE WAKE OF MARUSSIA DRIVER JULES BIANCHI'S HEAD INJURY, SHOULD F1 IMPLEMENT A CLOSED **COCKPIT IN GRAND PRIX CARS?**



Winner

'Close the cockpits, open up the rules, make the cars faster and safer, and get F1 back to pushing the limits of what's possible. That's why it exists." -SAM SMITH, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Miscellany from the last month

Price paid for Johnny Cash's 1970 Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow at the Barrett-Jackson Las Vegas auction. Color combo: black on black (duh).



New alphanumeric naming scheme for the Cadillac lineup, excluding Escalade and beginning with the CT6 flagship, which launches in late 2015.

Reported horsepower rating for the upcoming Honda Civic Type R. Which probably won't make it to America. (Sorry.) I'm not running away and it's nothing against Red **Bull. There are just times** in life when you need to start something new."

-F1 champion Sebastian Vettel, announcing that he will leave his team of the past six seasons to drive for Ferrari in 2015. The 27-year-old superstar replaces Fernando Alonso, who is expected to move to McLaren-Honda.

Amount of Group Lotus's global workforce that may be laid off following corporate restructuring announced in September.

Total sales and property lotal sales and property
tax <u>Tesla Motors</u> will
pay in Nevada over
the next 20 years. The
abatements are part
of a \$1.3 billion state
incentive package
created because the brand chose to build its Gigafactory battery plant near Reno.



Racing in the Rain Garth Stein's 2008 novel is one

of seven books a Dallas, Texas, school district suspended in September due to sexual content. The other six have been cleared, but at press time, Racing remains under review.



Penalty handed to Audi Sport ABT driver Daniel Abt for excessive energy consumption during the inaugural FIA
Formula E race in Beijing. His electric racing
car used 28.2 kWh over 25 laps, exceeding its rules-mandated allotment by 0.2 kWh.





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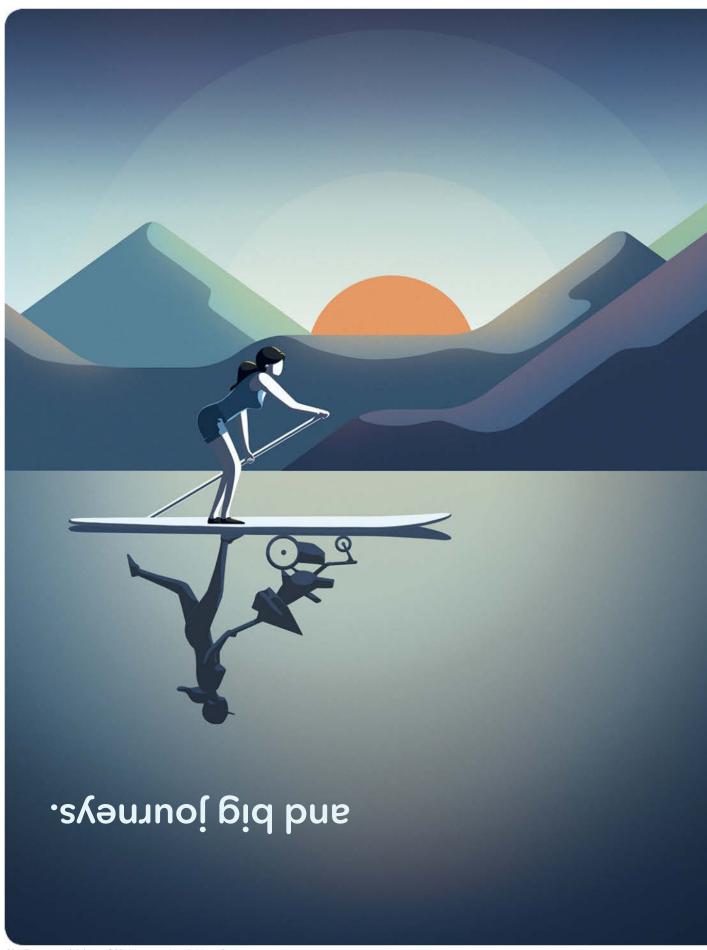
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WEST SIDE HIGHWAY AND W. 125TH STREET

Manhattan intersection where Miles Davis crashed his Lamborghini Miura in October 1972. Jim Glickenhaus witnessed the accident and helped the jazz icon, who was covered in blood and cocaine.



Foam Roller

PART TWO, IN WHICH SUPERCOLLECTOR AND FERRARI RETHINKER JIM GLICKENHAUS'S NEW CAR TAKES SHAPE. BY BART LENAERTS



lamour may lie across the finish line of the one-off carbuilding marathon, but it's certainly not part of the process. Each of Jim Glickenhaus's trips to Italy to oversee the creation of his newest sports car winds up in an industrial building more anonymous than a CIA safe house. During our last installment, at carbon-fiber specialist HP Composites, Glickenhaus saw four design proposals and picked his favorite. On a lazy Saturday a few months later, in a drab, gray building that seems a galaxy removed from the opulence of Pebble Beach, *l'ingegnere* Paolo Garella and designer Lowie Vermeersch show Glickenhaus a full-size foam model of his new car. Vermeersch admits the presentation of one-offs was far more formal when he worked for Pininfarina. "Luckily, Jim doesn't care about posh," he says. "This is a race car. It's about taking fat away."

When the cover drops, as the saying goes, the bullshit stops. Although Glickenhaus has seen numerous 3-D renderings of this car, called SCG 003, he's clearly in awe

when Vermeersch and Garella unveil the foam.

"Did I have this in mind a year ago? Nope. That's what's so exciting. I only knew I didn't need another monster. During development of P4/5 [Glickenhaus's first, Ferrari Enzo-based one-off—Ed.], Ferrari kept bragging about a 2200-pound supercar, then launched LaFerrari, another dinosaur with a big V-12. So we're doing it in their place, aiming for 600 hp and 2400 pounds."

Glickenhaus claims SCG 003 doesn't share family ties with P4/5 or chase the look of anything on road or track. But there is one benchmark: "Today, nothing's cooler

"Luckily, Jim doesn't care about posh. This is a race car. It's about taking fat away."

than the Audi LMP1. But they're ugly as hell and more complex than Battlestar Galactica. Lowie's proven we can make something similar, but simpler, road-legal, and plain gorgeous."

Glickenhaus is happy he can check out his latest venture



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Domestic box-office gross for 1985's The Protector, which starred Jackie Chan and was directed by Jim Glickenhaus.





FROM TOP LEFT:
GLICKENHAUS
LOOKS ON; HUMBLE
TOOLS OF THE
TRADE; PUTTING
PEN TO PAPER;
A FAMOUS FACE
ADDS INSPIRATION;
RAPID-PROTOTYPED
COMPONENTS.







in the foam. Vermeersch is too. "We could probably skip this stage, since design software has become so good," he notes. "But computers can't simulate emotions; seeing, touching, and discussing this three-dimensional sculpture, we suddenly spot new areas for improvement." It's a romantic sentiment rooted in a simple directive: "It's primarily a race car. Efficiency rules. Every part serves a purpose."

All of the engineers are present for the unveiling, even though it's Saturday and more than half the packaging work is already done. So when an issue with the air intakes pops up, laptops fly open and a bunch of very smart brains shift into top gear. Ten minutes later, a simple solution is found. It's a good example of the philosophy behind SCG 003: Vermeersch says that

during the taping process, he noticed the car's proportions improved without rear windows and that classic air intakes would save weight and add "nostalgic flair." Though Glickenhaus liked the reference to the Twenties and Thirties the windows suggested, he ultimately deferred to Vermeersch.

"This isn't about me, anyway," Glickenhaus says. "I'm not a car designer. I can't improve this, I can only screw it up. Over the years, I've learned to enjoy the moment and shut up."

Belgian writer and photographer team Bart Lenaerts and Lies De Mol (waft.be) have been following the development of the new Glickenhaus vehicle for Road & Track. They will later publish a book on the project.



NO CRIMINAL CHARGES FOR TONY STEWART

NASCAR megastar Tony Stewart will not face criminal charges related to the August death of 20-year-old driver Kevin Ward Jr. at a dirt-track race in upstate New York. A grand jury heard testimony from more than two dozen witnessesincluding drivers, medical personnel, track workers, and a pair of accident experts—but ruled there wasn't sufficient evidence to indict Stewart for second-degree manslaughter or criminally negligent homicide. When the decision was announced, it was revealed that a toxicology report found marijuana in Ward's system, "enough to impair judgment," according to Ontario County district attorney Michael Tantillo. Neither the grand jury's decision nor the positive drug test seems to have provided any peace of mind to the involved parties. The Ward family has indicated that it still holds Stewart accountable; the fiery three-time **Sprint Cup champ has** seemed uncharacteristically skittish since getting back behind the wheel.



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Gear Selection: **Holiday Edition**

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1. L.L.Bean AAA Safety Kit

A compact collection of helpful roadside necessities, from a crank-powered flashlight to booster cables and a first-aid kit. (\$69, llbean.com)

2. Drive The Wheels Off Bottle Openers

Whether you pick a stainless-steel BMW 2002, 1970 Monte Carlo, or Viper GTS, the torque to open a cold one comes from you. (\$14, stores.racetrackstyle.com)

3. Lego Technic Grand Prix Racer

A killer desktop ornament for the budding F1 fan or the aging Lego Maniac. (\$130, shop.lego.com)

4. Perchmount Fit

The best kind of in-car phone mount is one that also works outside the car, from the gym to the garage. (\$25, perchmount.com)

5. Pop Chart Lab Classic American Automobiles Poster

Car nuts and design geeks both will appreciate this compendium of notable American cars, from the 1895 Duryea to 2015 Challenger Hellcat. (\$35, popchartlab.com)

6. Aether Horizon Moto Jacket

One great thing about the fairer sex: She can rock a technical moto jacket, like this stylish version from Aether, even if she's never been on a bike. (\$595, aetherapparel.com)

7. MotorBinder and The New American Road Trip Mixtape

Dive into MotorBinder, a photographic retrospective of road racing's golden years, or get lost in a nostalgic story about the healing power of the open road with *The New American Road Trip Mixtape*. (\$69, motorbinder.com; \$12, amazon.com)

8. Mobile Home Siri iPhone Assistant

Simple, safe, one-button access to Siri voice commands via this wallet-size accessory. (\$79, drivewithsiri.com)

9. Simpson Venator Helmet

You probably already have a helmet. But is it radio-ready and made from carbon fiber interwoven with titanium? And did it only cost \$1000? (\$1000, simpsonraceproducts.com)

10. Frédérique Constant Vintage Rally Healey Chronograph

If you have a bonus check to blow, may we recommend an elegant, Swiss automatic watch inspired by the iconic Austin-Healey Works Special Test Cars? We prefer the chrono. (\$3395, frederique-constant.com)

11. Trusco Toolbox

Because when you take tools on the road, you care about how they're stored. Steel, Japanesemade, blue enamel. (\$90, field-online.com)

12. OPI Ford Mustang Nail Polish

If you're lucky enough to have snagged a woman with real appreciation for the first American pony car, help her accessorize with shades like Race Red and Angel With A Leadfoot. (\$10, ulta.com)

13. R&T Fastback Tee

A new collection of extra-soft tees with striking line drawings from *The Road & Track Illustrated Auto Dictionary.* (\$20, roadandtrackshop.com)





Nickname given by the French media to Briggs Cunningham's Series 61 Cadillac at Le Mans in 1950. It was not a term of endearment.



V FOR VENDETTA

WITH GERMAN COMPETITION IN ITS SIGHTS, CADDY'S SMALL SEDAN GETS A BIG SPEED BOOST.

go-faster, V-badged version of Cadillac's compact ATS sedan was always planned, so there was no massive surgery needed to create the ferocious ATS-V. Cadillac started with the 3.6-liter V-6 from the CTS Vsport and added Pankl Racing Systems-sourced titanium connecting rods, two water-to-air intercoolers, and twin titanium-turbine turbochargers to spin up more than 450 hp and 445 lb-ft of torque. That's ample motivation for this 3600-pound BMW M3-fighter. A third radiator, low and center in that angry front fascia, is dedicated solely to wicking heat from the transmission and electronically locking differential.

It's grippier, too. Beefier suspension components increase roll stiffness by 50 percent compared with the standard ATS, helping Michelin Pilot Super Sport rubber find footing. The optional track pack adds a front splitter, side skirts, and a rear spoiler, all of which help produce 100 pounds of downforce at 150 mph.

There's a choice between an eight-speed automatic and a six-speed manual, each of which will let you perform a no-lift shift. This is Cadillac's cry of "Achtung, baby!" to Mercedes's AMG and BMW's M divisions, so keep your foot in it for America.

—ROBIN WARNER





MONTEZEMOLO PUSHED OUT AT FERRARI

After nearly 23 years as Ferrari chairman. Luca di Montezemolo stepped down in October, reportedly due to clashes with the brass at parent company Fiat SpA. There's never been love lost hetween the erstwhile Maranello boss and Fiat head Sergio Marchionne, but long-standing rumors of a rift escalated during the Monza **Grand Prix.** "Nobody is indispensable," said Marchionne, who also called Ferrari's recent F1 woes "unacceptable." But the central conflict likely revolved around sales volume. Montezemolo was vocal about maintaining exclusivity, pledging to pare deliveries to less than 7000 cars per year. That didn't jibe with Marchionne's plan to ramp up luxury and exotic production to better compete with Volkswagen Group subsidiaries Audi and Lamborghini. So who replaced Montezemolo as Ferrari's head honcho? Marchionne, of course.



Atacoma Field Chronograph Series No. 1945: 45mm, black PVD steel case, scrow case back and screw down crown, antireflective sapphire crystal, water resistant to 100 meters, clarm feature golden tan distressed leather strap with black PVD buckle, and Luminax self-powered illumination Swiss Mado.

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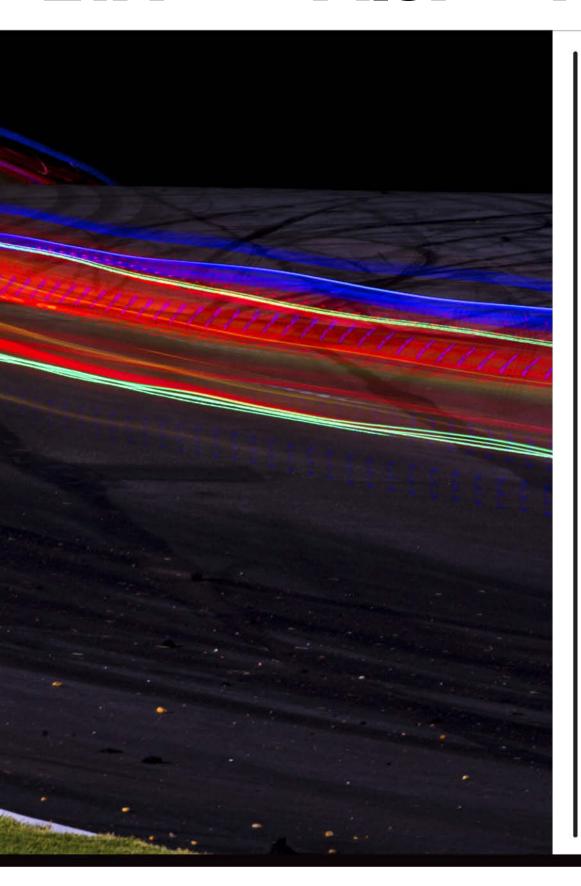


AVERAGE LAP SPEED, IN MILES PER HOUR, OF P-CLASS CARS



LAPS COMPLETED BY THE CHAMPIONSHIP-WINNING NO. 5 ACTION EXPRESS RACING CORVETTE DP







JAG XE RUMORS: ALUMINUM BODY. TURBO FOURS. DIESEL OPTIONS

Remember the Jaguar S-type? We're trying to forget it, too. But in the upcoming XE sedan, Coventry is promising the BMW 3-series rival we've always dreamed about. Jag will offer a breadth of engine and drivetrain options for its new aluminum-bodied, premium compact entrant, which is slated to arrive in Europe this spring. Luckily, that same courtesy will be extended to North American buyers when the XE lands here midway through 2016. According to a source within the company, Jag has okayed turbo four-cylinder options for the U.S. market. Expect to see both diesel and gas 2.0-liter millsrated at up to 180 and 240 hp, respectively-alongside the range-topping, 340-hp supercharged V-6. And while an eight-speed automatic will be the sole transmission at launch, our insider also confirmed that a six-speed manual will eventually be offered. Imagining a lightweight, turbodiesel Jag with three pedals, it's almost like the S-type never existed. Almost.



08:14

Claimed Nordschleife lap time set by the 2015 Range Rover Sport SVR, according to Land Rover. That bests Sport Auto magazine's listed time for the Aston Martin DB9 by two full seconds.



LORE OF THE RING

Before the marketers took over, the legendary Nürburgring Nordschleife track was the arbiter of performance bona fides for the world's most hard-core sports cars. Now, even the Prius has an official lap time, and Ring misinformation abounds. Our man in Nürburg, American pro racer Robb Holland, sets you straight on the track you think you know.



CLAIM: THE NÜRBURGRING WENT BANKRUPT.

TRUE! On July 18, 2012, the Ring's owner filed for bankruptcy. The track was long subsidized by the German government and used as a tourist attraction for the Eifel region. This worked well until a couple of businessmen (we use the term loosely) leased the Ring with the idea of turning it into a Euro Disney for petrolheads. The masses failed to show, things fell apart, and engineering firm the Capricorn Group is now trying to buy the track for a paltry \$123 million. Good news: As part of the sale, the buyer has guaranteed to invest almost \$31 million for improvements, keep the track open to the public, and support manufacturer and motorsports activities there. Bad news: At press time, the sale has yet to be finalized.

CLAIM: THE NÜRBURGRING IS IN NUREMBERG.

FALSE! If that were true, it would be called the Nurembergring. The track is in Nürburg, about three and a half hours at autobahn speed from Nuremberg, site of the famous Nazi trials.

CLAIM: I CAN DRIVE IT IN GRAN TURISMO 5 OR FORZA, SO I CAN DRIVE IT IN REAL LIFE.

YOU ACTUALLY THINK THIS? As good as modern driving sims are, nothing can prepare you for this track. It's narrower and faster than you'd think, and the elevation changes are insane. Not to mention that the weather can change from sunny to rainy a few times per lap. (The guys at RSRNurburg, a local training and Ring-rental-car business, ask participants to raise their hands in driver meetings if they've driven the course in a video game. Anyone who responds is pulled aside for an "additional briefing," because the people who think they know the track are usually the first to get in trouble.)

CLAIM: I CAN DRIVE THE TRACK AT ANY TIME.

PLEASE. As a general rule, manufacturers have exclusive, daily use of the track from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The tourist (public) sessions typically run weekdays during summer from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., plus some Saturday afternoons and evenings, and all day Sunday. But times vary. Check the website (nuerburgring.de/en) for availability.

CLAIM: I CAN TAKE A RENTAL CAR TO THE RING.

SURE! (**BUT DON'T.**) In the age of GPS, there's no such thing as going unnoticed. Every major rental-car company has clauses prohibiting Nürburgring use, so grabbing a BMW from the airport and blasting through a couple laps will result in a lifetime ban from said company.

CLAIM: I SHOULDN'T TAKE A RENTAL CAR TO THE RING.

YOU CAN, AND SHOULD. But it has to be the right type. Try RSR-Nurburg, Rent4Ring, or RaceRentCar. All are based near the track's tourist entrance and offer a plethora of prepped and insured cars.

CLAIM: I'M LIABLE TO THE TRACK IF I CRASH.

DUH. Adding Armco barriers both improved driver safety and bolstered the track's bottom line. Anyone who causes an accident is responsible for damages plus the cost of the circuit's closure. One recent crash reportedly ran up \$19,000 in Armco repairs.

CLAIM: IF I WRECK, MY INSURANCE WILL COVER IT.

NOPE. The Nürburgring is a public road, but after years of expensive claims from the same region (accidents happen all the time), German companies caught on. Now, pretty much every non-German insurance provider also specifically excludes the Nürburgring from its policies. That includes third-party damages and health insurance.

THE NEW THINKING

ENTHUSIASTS TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT CHEVROLET VERSUS THE COMPETITION

Earlier this year, we invited four Road & Track readers to get up close and personal with the Chevrolet lineup, and we picked Stewart Graham to be our expert on the Chevy Equinox. Stewart experienced the quality and versatility of the Chevy through a challenge that left the competition sagging. In both perception and real-world performance, we showed Stewart why the Equinox is a great choice for enthusiasts like you—or the people who ask you for car-buying advice.

CHALLENGE

GROUND CLEARANCE AND CARGO

People love crossovers like the Equinox for its flexible interior and a go-anywhere minimum ground clearance of 6.9 inches.

But they might not realize that ground clearance and cargo are related. More weight in the vehicle lowers that clearance. To show that the Equinox's capabilities raise the bar versus the Honda CR-V and Toyota RAV4, we loaded up each crossover with bags of play sand and had Stewart and our other readers drive over a pile of bricks at a height just over 6 inches. After each pass we added more weight until the ground clearance was too low. Once the Equinox made it with 700 pounds of sand, we gave up—it already beat the Toyota RAV4 by 200 pounds and the Honda CR-V by 150.



TRUE STORY

"My favorite road is a scenic ribbon of asphalt adjacent to the Hudson River Valley in Westchester County, NY, where I now live. I absolutely love finding new lines and trying to perfect every corner."



HAULING ADVICE

TO DETERMINE YOUR VEHICLE'S MAX WEIGHT CAPACITY, LOOK FOR THE TIRE AND LOADING
INFORMATION LABEL—IT'S USUALLY ON THE PILLAR NEAR THE DRIVER'S SIDE DOOR LATCH. ON
IT WILL BE A COMBINED WEIGHT OF OCCUPANTS AND CARGO THAT IS YOUR SAFE LIMIT.



EQUINOX

There were plenty of things that impressed Stewart about the Equinox, but one feature in particular was the Multi-Flex® sliding rear seat, which moves 8 inches back and forth for quick adjustment to passenger space or cargo room without the need to fold the seats.







Keep watching for news on the Chevrolet lineup, including more special reports, enthusiast insights, and driving adventures.

STRONGER SIGNAL. MORE COVERAGE.

CONNECT WITH EQUINOX.



OnStar 4GLTE Connection

MOBILE WI-FI HOTSPOT

Your 2015 Equinox can now be a mobile Wi-Fi hotspot' with all the ease and convenience of your home Wi-Fi. Need to make changes to a presentation while you're on the road? Pull over, park safely and do it easily, without having to hunt for a coffee shop. And the signal extends outside the vehicle too. Connect to available 4G LTE Wi-Fi while camping, at a soccer game, tailgating and more when the vehicle is in accessory mode.



OnStar 4G LTE Convenience

CONNECT TO MORE

Most tablets sold today rely on Wi-Fi.
And while using a mobile device to stay connected is convenient, available OnStar²
4G LTE built-in Wi-Fi¹ powered by your vehicle is a better experience than relying on your mobile device's battery. Now, you can easily connect up to seven devices at once, letting you stream your music playlist while the kids stream their favorite games or movies during long road trips.



OnStar 4G LTE Signal

STRONG, RELIABLE, PASSWORD PROTECTED

With the most reliable built-in data connection available from any automaker, OnStar² in the 2015 Equinox is more powerful than ever. Thanks to an external antenna on top of the vehicle, your signal is fast and stronger than a smartphone hotspot. And you only have to put in a password once. Tablets or other devices will remember the network.



FIND NEW ROADS

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE 2015 EQUINOX GO TO CHEVROLET.COM/EQUINOX







Lamborghini originally claimed the Huracán's single-screen system was Tegra 3-based, but it was actually built on the old Audi system. We hear a couple of Audi engineers had to come in at the last minute to save Lambo's less sophisticated one-screen setup.

DON'T TOUCH THAT BUTTON











AUDI'S DIGITAL INFOTAINMENT/GAUGE-CLUSTER MASH-UP IS REALISTIC AND GORGEOUS, BUT DRIVER-FOCUSED TO A FAULT.



Audi's Virtual Cockpit, which will debut in the 2016 TT, combines both infotainment and gauge info in a single, sumptuous screen. While future gauge pods are almost certainly going to be CPU-based, the blazingly fast and streamlined Virtual Cockpit gives us hope that the loss of analog won't suck. This is alldigital done (mostly) right. –DAVID GLUCKMAN HITS: The first thing you notice is the stunning clarity of the 12.3-inch, thin-film-transistor liquid crystal display. It's driven by a pair of Tegra 30 quadcore chips from Nvidia's Tegra 3* series, and all that processing power means ultrasmooth operation; there's no stuttering when you zoom, scroll, or transition to a different display, even when the screen is mostly occupied by a detailed map in "infotainment" view.

"Classic" view gives more real estate to the digital gauges, rendered at 60 frames per second, and both the tach and speedo have a Fresnel-lens effect to give them a realistic, glassed-in feel. Unlike most digital gauge systems, Virtual Cockpit doesn't offer an unnecessary level of customization. The intuitive controls are a vast improvement over Audi's current quadrant system, which requires a glance at the screen to determine which of the car's four soft buttons you want. In Virtual Cockpit, two contextual buttons—left to choose basic functions, right to dive deeper into what's on-screen—surround the steering wheel's left-spoke thumbwheel and the center console's touch-sensitive knob.

MISSES: Console controls are there for a front passenger to play with, but there's no center screen. This is a problem for the right-seater, who can't see everything on the instrument cluster, and for the driver, who will be distracted by his companion's presses and twirls. While other Audis will keep their center screens when they get this system, the "sporty" TT (see our first drive on page 54) and the R8 use the single-screen layout. A so-called

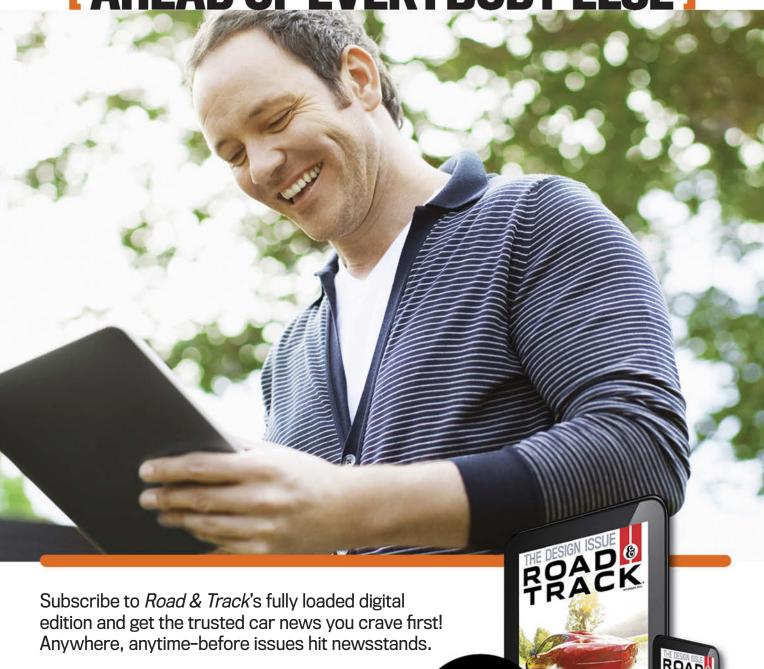
driver-focused setup that messes with driver focus makes little sense.

WHAT COMES NEXT: Virtual Cockpit's underlying hardware will soon power the rest of the VW Group's high-end nav systems. Audi handles the programming for VW's 12 marques, applying brand-specific interfaces to the finished product. Porsche and Bentley, both of which have been using the same basic systems for nearly a decade, are next to get Tegra 3-based setups. As for Audi, its next big thing will be vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-infrastructure connected-car communication.



I CANNOT OVERSTATE MY LOVE FOR SATELLITE RADIO, one of the few meaningful updates to a simple but powerful medium. But terrestrial radio still has advantages. Specifically, during one of those flat-out-across-eight-state-lines road trips. Sometimes, major miles have to be covered in a hurry, and that's the best time to tune in to the boots on the ground—local voices, with tastes and viewpoints that spring from a specific place and time. As the view out the window trades eastern white pine for Texas mock-orange, why insist on the same aural landscape you know from your daily commute? Right now, sun-cured preachers are thundering sharp and flat into the California desert; a pair of overcaffeinated, middle-aged men are bashing on about chemtrails; and deep in bluegrass country, a program about Motown history wafts across the Smoky Mountains. Technology recommends "new" entertainment to us based on the entertainment we already like—which means it's not new at all. That makes odd, surprising, dissenting, and possibly uncomfortable ideas all the more rare. And good for the soul. –JOSH CONDON

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He enjoys long walks on the beach, flannel shirts, maple syrup, and dogsled racing.

—CANADIAN-BORN HINCHCLIFFE'S BIO AT INDYCAR.COM



ust last year at Barber Motorsports Park, I sat like a dummy in my broken car for almost the entire race, waiting for a caution so I could get towed back to the pits. After I got hit and broke a wheel, I fully expected another caution to come and to get back to the pits and go racing again. A delay of a couple minutes, right? Try almost 70 laps—the race was only 90 laps long—just sitting in my car, and absolutely nothing happened. It's the one race on the calendar where a bunch of cautions are guaranteed [Barber is known for "enthusiastic" yellow-flag use —Ed.] except for the day I have a problem.

So I was in my car and I couldn't see anything because I was behind a barrier, just little glimpses here and there, and my crew entertained me over the radio. It was hot, I was strapped in and fully suited, sweating my

arse off. To make matters worse, I had to pee really bad.

My crew, who didn't want to clean *that* up, was doing a masterful job of keeping me preoccupied on the radio. We touched on a bunch of interesting topics, everything from space travel to Will Power's bathroom habits. It wasn't for the kids, let's put it that way. The thing is, we forgot that fans have full access to our radio frequencies; I had people come up to me afterward to say they stopped listening to the race and tuned in to our chatter instead.

Luckily, I was able to hold on without wetting myself. The safety workers finally let me out with about five laps to go, and I ran to the Porta-John to handle my business.

All I can say is, if I'm faced with that situation again, bring a mop, because I have no intention of waiting.

-AS TOLD TO MARSHALL PRUETT

by JOHN KREWSON

A Terrible Time

THE AGE OF TRULY BAD CARS IS PAST, BUT THE GREMLIN ABIDES.



The day I showed up at *R&T* contributor Colin Comer's shop bearing the scars of driving his flawless—let's make that "good as new"—1972 AMC Gremlin across two states, he took one look at me and suggested we hit the nearest bar. Which, it turns out, is where the guys at the Milwaukee American Motors plant went after work. I sat there with a beer, under a wall full of trunk badges tacked up by line workers from years past, and, as you do after a few hundred miles in a Gremlin, thought about my own mortality.

Hornet. Ambassador. Spirit. AMX, a rare ray of sunshine in the AMC murk. Pacer, by God. A smattering of Jeeps, the Rebel, the Javelin. And below them all, Gremlin. What a thing.

If you're unaware: Gremlins are considered bad cars. I'll just let that statement sit there.

When the transporter dropped it off, it sat in our parking lot looking bright yellow and deceptively good. It radiated the kind of hazy glow shared by all old stuff, the insidious half-light of nostalgia that filters the negative from memory. You remember how Steve Miller sounded coming over the radio, the smell of beach towels drying across hot vinyl.

Yet the car's reputation endures. Parking it behind *R&T*'s building, I passed a woman from a neighboring office as she walked out to her little Corolla. She actually flinched as she recognized the car.

"I used to own a Gremlin!" she called out.
"I'm sorry," I said.

"Not your fault," she said, and looked at her Nineties Toyota like it was Paul Newman. Which, relatively, it was. Colin got stuck with the Gremlin when a deal for a Shelby Cobra went sour. The AMC was a consolation prize for not being allowed to purchase one of Carroll Shelby's finest. All of which stretches the definitions of "consolation" and "prize." I'd volunteered to deliver the car to his shop in Wisconsin, in retrospect stretching the definition of "adventure," and possibly "drive."

But then, the Gremlin stretched the definition of "car." Cheapness was its reason for be-

ing. To build it, AMC chopped up the Hornet, pared it down to a price, and hyped that price in advertising: "If you can afford a car, you can afford two Gremlins." Thus distancing the Gremlin from the definition of "car."

Colin's Gremlin admittedly worked okay. It stopped as well as you'd expect for a car of its class and age. It wasn't dangerously slow. It didn't overheat in a sticky midwestern summer, the wipers wiped, the headlights lit. By the numbers, not bad.

But, as we're always saying, cars are about more than numbers. As I wallowed the Gremlin down the road, I tried to find something that didn't scream cut-rate. The steering wheel flexed. The pedals felt like they moved in mud. The gearshift was imprecise yet heavy and gritty, as if a groaning cable was shoving around sandstone cogs. The interior was a drearscape of mushy tan vinyl.

Talk about the banality of evil. To call something cheap and cheerful has become ironic slang, a way to say, "I'm poor and this thing is depressing." But it doesn't have to be like that. Carmakers tell us it's tough to design within a budget, but look at the iconic cars that have been born that way: Golfs and original Minis and CVCC Civics and Fiestas and so on. They make the world happier for the wage slave, and people who can afford much better keep those

cars long after they need them, because they are happy machines.

But the Gremlin isn't happy. It reeks of paycheck-to-paycheck desperation; optimism was engineered out in favor of meeting a budget, and somewhere along the way, someone despaired of making the car any good.

Despair, Thomas Aquinas told us, is really the only sin. Anyone who bought a Gremlin bought a despair incubator. It's hard enough to be poor in this world, a status that in so many ways tells you that you're a lesser person for earning less and does so repeatedly, until you're in danger of believing it. No one who wants a better life for themselves and their children should have to drive something like the Gremlin, a car that quietly undermines your self-worth every time you creak one of its doors open.

That, plus the fact that Colin's example refused to hold a course, wandering over hell and gone the entire time I drove it, meant I arrived in Milwaukee irritable and angry.

"That car," I told Colin, "wants to die. And it should. It couldn't hold a line if you used glue."



Colin looked it up and down and said, "Well, of course not. Look at those cheap repro biasplies. They're inner tubes with sidewalls."

Cheap tires. The falsest of false economies.

Colin later redeemed his car. He put modern radials on it and "did a few things here and there." It subsequently became a blast to drive, because Colin is a damn wizard. Oddly, and for reasons I can't quite explain, I now want it. But when I sat at that AMC bar, I thought about all the people who bought bad Gremlins.

Gremlin. Gone now, killed by Golfs and Civics and Fiestas, dead and passed into cheap, cheap legend.

I can't shake the feeling that the ending should make me sadder than it does.

John Krewson is a senior editor at R&T. He, too, was born in Wisconsin and radiates a hazy glow.



InfinitiUSA.com/QX80

Scott Conant, chef & restaurateur, and friends
Always wear your seat belt, and please don't drink and drive. ©2014 INFINITI.



by JACK BARUTH

Fox in the Hills

SOME RISKS ARE ACCEPTABLE, SOME ARE VITAL.



We are never as safe as we think we are, and never is that more true than when we dabble in ritual. Today, tourists sweat and laugh and smile to climb the Pyramid of the Sun, posing for their own phones at the top, showing off their kitschy outfits and veneered teeth. It's all good fun, but remember this: There are human sacrifices buried at the corners and underneath. The textbooks note, dispassionately, that some had their hearts removed before burial. Today, it is cheap to climb the pyramid, but there was a time when it required that your heart be cut out and placed in a bowl.

Twenty-two years ago, guided by some vague statements in a car magazine, I fired up my trusty 1989 Volkswagen Fox and headed for the Hocking Hills in southeastern Ohio. I had only a paper map and a desire to find some roads. I was lucky; I found what I still consider the best and most challenging of them immediately. It is a 1000-foot staircase climb, dirty with leaves and debris, sabotaged by curve and camber.

The first time—no, the first five times, the first 10, the first 50—I was effectively blind, ignorant to the subtleties of the road, too busy trying to keep the 81-hp Fox on the boil. Second gear was too tall for many of the turns, so I learned to double-clutch into first, the 155-section Pirellis spinning and catching, the rear drums checking out after the fifth hard stop for a hairpin with a 200-foot fall inches beyond the asphalt.

The posted speed limit was 55 mph, but I didn't have the power to threaten that until the top of the hill, where I could drive the long

sweepers in third gear and tempt fate with a sharp lift of the throttle before the next blind turn. I thought I was quite the daredevil, but in reality, both my car and I were of modest and easily reached capability.

There were plenty of close calls, almost all of them between me and the unyielding terrain, the rock wall to the inside and the roller-coaster drop to death on the outside. Once, I missed an approach downshift from third to second, slipped my foot off the brake pedal in panic, and managed to come to a halt with the Fox's silver nose over the precipice, its front wheels in two sunken, loamy lines to the edge. There was something clean about the fact that I would have died alone and unseen, a sacrifice to the mountain.

When the Fox wore out, I returned in a new Plymouth Neon, 132 hp. Finally, I could

challenge the speed limit at full chat up the steepest sections. Then a turbocharged Passat, arrogant and smooth on the fastest bits, whistling past slower traffic. A subtle and sweet-hearted 3.0-liter BMW, the steering alive in my hands, able to sweep the tail out on the hairpins like a rally car.

In my second decade on the hill, I started bringing real hardware. A Lotus 7 clone, darty and sparking its exhaust on bumps as the revs soared. A Porsche 993 with B&B exhaust

that whooped through third gear and would occasionally yaw under hard braking in such a way as to freeze the blood in my veins. There could, it seemed, be an impending sacrifice, the terms and conditions to be dictated by the engineers who designed the kinematic-toe suspension.

Always faster and more intense. The innocence of my low-speed shenanigans in the Fox, where I'd occasionally be caught up by a hard-faced local in a pickup, was replaced 18 years

later by the all-wheel-drive scrabble and rocketship exit of a V-8 Audi coupe. Now the stakes were high, and I wouldn't just fall alone from the mountain. I'd fly from it.

For the past two years, we've returned to these roads to determine R&T's Performance Car of the Year. If a car has faults and flaws, you'll find them there. What a racetrack flatters—short-stroke suspension, narrow powerband, steamroller tires—those hills punish. These new cars have computer-designed safety tolerances and perfection of assembly that would have been unthinkable to the Brazilians who assembled my wobbly, flexible VW. The brakes all work and the tires all grip and never do you have something like a beam rear axle just taking a brief holiday from proper alignment under transitional load.

But my God, are they all fast. The so-called econocars threatening my old Porsche for outright velocity, the supercars pacing the secondgear corners and short straights like tigers testing the boundaries of a cage. It's no longer the machine that sets the limits of a car's usable road speed. It's the driver, the risk tolerance, the willingness to become a sacrifice.

I will admit that I took one run for my teenage self. I took the run that I'd always imagined those Serengeti Driver-wearing car-magazine ur-heroes taking. In a car with seven times the Fox's power, I let it run to the limit, not faltering or stinting. Full throttle everywhere, full brake. Twenty minutes



without compromise or sense or sanity. Alone on these empty roads, I let the mountain weigh my heart.

For now, the mountain is satisfied to let me live, and I'm satisfied to be alive. I tell myself that I won't do it again, even as the voice in my head reminds me: This is how a ritual is made; this is how a sacrifice is prepared.

Jack Baruth is a contributing editor at R&T. It's a risk we're willing to take.

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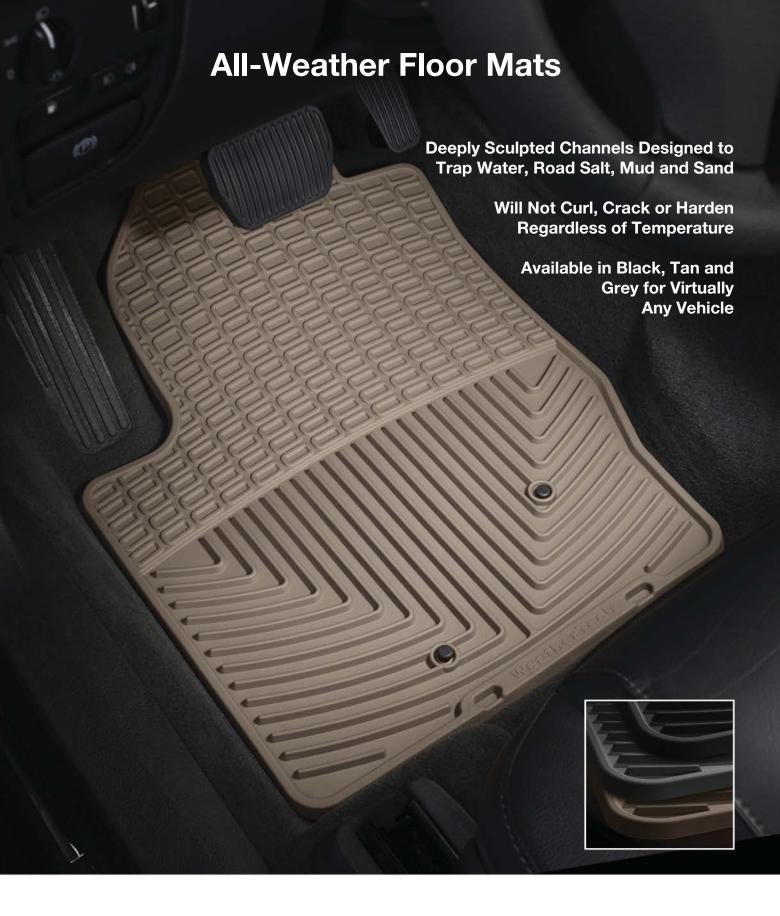


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DRIVES

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DRIVES



[2016]

Audi TT & TTS

STILL UNIOUE. STILL REMARKABLY GOOD.

THE AUDI TT IS ONCE AGAIN THE QUICKest car in its segment. It's also the lightest, cheapest, and prettiest. Then again, it's the slowest, heaviest, most expensive, and least attractive, too, because the TT exists—still—in a sort of competitive no-man's-land. In the new-car market, it's a party of one, a style-forward, four-seat sports car with humble roots that somehow

manages to be neither expensive or cheap, hard-core or fluffy.

Yet, a lack of competition doesn't take away from the fact that this is the best example yet of Audi's all-wheel-drive two-plus-two. The TT deserves praise for being a rarity in a safety-bloated era: Each revision has been lighter than the last. In this, its third generation, the car is

down an additional 100 pounds. Like TTs past, it shares a platform with the Volkswagen Golf; both cars are now based on the VW Group's flexible MQB architecture.

The TT still has its trademark aluminumand-steel hybrid unibody. In the past, the heavier stuff—the steel—was concentrated at the back of the car. But Audi engineers kept the steel low in the car here, lowering its center of gravity by 0.4 inch. The hatch and doors are now aluminum as well—with the exception of the plastic bumper covers, every exterior body panel is made of the stuff. Aluminum has also been used in an unlikely home: the electrical

system. The 2016 TT's battery is in the trunk, helping offset the car's inherent forward weight bias, and that requires fat cables running from stem to stern, supplying juice. For that purpose, the TT replaces copper wires with aluminum in a thicker gauge, offering the same current-handling capability but saving around six

pounds in the process.

PRICE \$42,000

POWERTRAIN

273 lb-ft; AWD, 6-speed automatic

WEIGHT 2943 lb

0-62 MPH 5.3 sec.

ON SALE Summer

TOP SPEED 155 mph

2.0-liter I-4, 230 hp,

(TT, est)

So the new TT is lighter, which is swell on paper. But the car also feels lighter. Not just through the typical-Audi light steering, but also in the way the whole car rotates. There's less of the heavy-up-front feeling of the previous TT, in

part due to strategic weight reduction and also because the front axle has been moved forward. The resulting longer wheelbase also helps improve ride quality.

Audi also got more out of the TT's engines without making them bigger. Graduating to the latest version of VW's 2.0-liter turbo four, the base TT now puts out 230 hp, up from 211. At 310 hp, the sportier TTS version inches toward the last-generation TT RS, which pumped out 360 hp. A new RS model is already in the works; that may be the tip of a TT iceberg, because





Audi's head of R&D is threatening to unleash another variant based on one of the company's recent TT auto-show concepts. First up might be a production version of the gorgeous TT Sportback shown in Paris this fall, but we also expect a crossover, which would give the TT wider appeal—though not elicit applause from us.

All U.S.-bound TT and TTS models will be equipped with all-wheel drive and a version of VW's excellent six-speed dual-clutch automatic. The transmission is as good as ever, reacting when you call for a shift and thinking ahead in full-auto mode, so we're only a little upset about not getting the manual. The engineers have even allowed the four's torque rating to pass the 258-lb-ft threshold of the former TT and TTS, with the S car now topping out at 280 lb-ft.

While the front-drive VW GTI has an optional electronically controlled locking diff to help put its power down, the all-wheel-drive TT needs no such hardware. The continually variable clutch in its center differential responds more quickly than before when it sends torque to the rear wheels, and in Dynamic mode with stability control in Sport, the car will let you adjust the rear end's attitude on throttle. There's zero torque steer, even on the more powerful TTS—the computers sort out everything before it reaches your hands. All of which means that the TT and TTS are quicker and easier to drive fast than their predecessors.



Models equipped with Audi Drive Select (optional on TT, standard on TTS) get a version of the GTI's "Soundaktor," a little speaker in the cowl that embellishes engine noise. This kind of trickery is becoming common in new cars, but as fake sounds go, VW and Audi offer some of the most real, with noisemakers that add to the experience, not mask it with a layer of muffling. (There is a joke to be made here, but a gentleman will not make it —Ed.)

Drive Select lets the driver tailor engine, transmission, all-wheel-drive, and steering behavior, as well as behavior of the optional adaptive magnetorheological dampers. Such customization isn't new, but Audi has chosen to let you access it in a new way. The TT marks the introduction of something Audi calls Virtual Cockpit. This technology suite consists of a big LCD screen where the gauges would normally go, a modified version of Audi's MMI controls

on the steering wheel, and a handful of redundant controls on the console. Climate functions are handled by dials and displays in the vents themselves—which is incredibly cool—but everything else is shown on the "instrument" screen. There is no screen in the center stack, part of a driver-focused push with Audi's new sports cars.

Virtual Cockpit seems to have distracted the car's designers, because there isn't much else going on in the actual cockpit. (Audi says the TT's dash resembles an airplane wing from above; we didn't see it.) It's similar to the relatively barren cabin of the new Audi A3, but the idea is taken further here. The stark layout feels oddly cheap, even though nothing about this interior's construction or materials was inexpensive. But hey, it's still the best interior concept in the segment, right? Maybe some competition wouldn't be such a bad thing.

—DAVID GLUCKMAN



[2015]

Porsche Cayenne



AS PORSCHE NEVER TIRES OF TELLING us, the Cayenne is the cash cow that funds development of the company's sports cars. You know, the Porsches everyone really loves. And as much as people (And, okay, a few staffers at this magazine, after a strong drink and a Google image search for "993 RS" —Ed.) like to bash the Cayenne, since the second-generation model was introduced in 2010, it's actually been a fine car. But with the arrival of Porsche's baby SUV, the Macan, the Cayenne was in need of a refresh.

To start, Porsche added a dash of Macan to the Cayenne's styling, then focused on subtle improvements in power and fuel economy. The base 3.6-liter, Volkswagensourced VR-6 gets the bullet, leaving the diesel model as the entrylevel Cayenne. That 3.0-liter V-6

produces 240 hp and 406 lb-ft of torque, and it surges to 60 mph in just over seven seconds. Thereafter, it cruises in comfort and returns

3.0-liter V-6, 240

WEIGHT 4652 lb

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hp, 406 lb-ft; AWD,

8-speed automatic 0-60 MPH 7.2 sec

TOP SPEED 135 mph

nearly 30 mpg. Meanwhile, at the top of the range, the Turbo's 4.8-liter V-8 now produces 520 hp, up from 500, and churns out 553 lb-ft, the same torque as the outgoing Turbo S.

The biggest changes are in the middle of the range. There's a new plug-in hybrid that can go up to 22 miles on electric power. Yawn. Next?

The Cayenne S drops the naturally aspirated 4.8-liter V-8 for a twin-turbo V-6. This 3.6-liter is not a version of the turbo 3.0-liter used in the Panamera S, mind you, nor is it a turbocharged version of the Cayenne's old base 3.6-liter VR-6. (Confused? Welcome to VW Group drivetrain discussions.) Just know that this is the 3.6 developed for the top-of-the-line Macan Turbo.

The boosted six is disappointingly muted compared with the old, throbbing V-8, but it makes 20 hp more and is undeniably effective at hurling the Cayenne's 4600-pound bulk down the road. With the optional Sport Chrono pack, the S reaches 60 mph in 5.1 seconds, a mere tenth slower than Porsche's 911 Targa 4. The turbo six's broad spread of torque—the same 406 lb-ft as the diesel, but available from 1350 to 4500 rpm—makes the old, naturally aspirated V-8, but also that Targa, feel gutless. Fuel economy also increases for the S, from 16/22 mpg to 17/24 mpg.

While every two-pedal Porsche save the hybrid Panamera uses the marque's wonderful dual-clutch PDK, the Cayenne remains saddled with a traditional eight-speed automatic. The shifts in the S we drove were disappointingly jerky, although the Turbo we tried shifted smoothly. Let's hope it was a fluke.

The Turbo has more grip and better brake

feel, but the 220-pound-lighter S flicks into turns easier. Few SUVs steer with such precision or provide such scope for naughtiness. Find a curve with enough space, keep your foot in it, and the rearward torque transfer will eventually arc the back tires out enough to require a proper helping of opposite lock. We'd never deign to suggest the Cayenne as an alternative to a

911, but of all the SUVs claiming to have sportscar traits, of the few that come anywhere close to delivering, this is the one. -CHRIS CHILTON





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DRIVES



[2015]

Mini Hardtop 4 Door

MORE USEFUL, BUT AT WHAT COST?

IF YOU ACCEPT THAT EVER-EXPANDING Mini is a brand, rather than a descriptor, this new Hardtop 4 Door—the car's actual, if uncreative, model name—makes perfect sense. Sure, the standard two-door Mini looks cool, but four doors are useful. Simply adding two extra holes to a two-door Mini would have been pointless, though, given that car's lack of rear legroom. So the 4 Door's designers threw in an extra 2.9 inches of wheelbase.

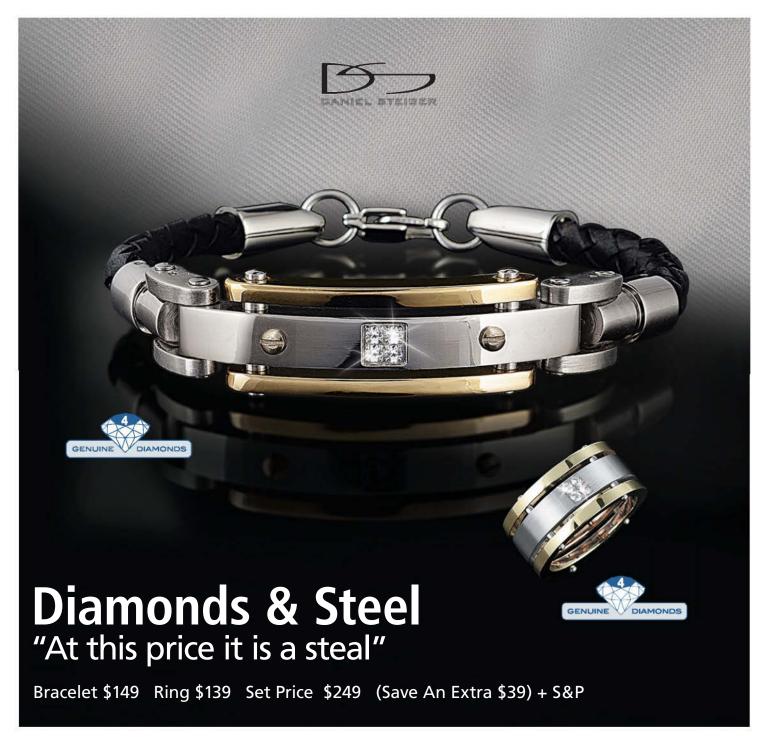
That doesn't sound like much, but it makes this a proper five-seat car, at least in a pinch. There's still way more room in the trunk and back seat of a VW Golf, which is admittedly 10 inches longer than this new, big Mini. The Mini's real problem is that it seems to have been savagely beaten by the ugly stick on its way out of R&D. The profile looks unhappy, and when you open one of those back doors, there's a weird dogleg in the window frame.

Mini engineers claim the 4 Door's chassis is set up to feel just like the standard car's, but the longer wheelbase seems to calm the latter's

fidgety ride without compromising the traditional Mini hunger for apexes. Engines mirror those in the two-door car: a 134-hp turbo three for the Cooper, which accelerates to 60 mph in about eight seconds; and a 189-hp, 2.0-liter four in the Cooper S that's a second quicker to the same mark. Both are three-tenths of a second slower than their two-door cousins—blame the approximately 140-pound weight gain. The S feels brisk, but nothing more, so wait for the inevitable John Cooper Works if you're a horse-power junkie.

The original two-door will still take the lion's share of sales, but the 4 Door's direct access to its rear seats will likely bring in new buyers who'd previously discounted the Hardtop and didn't want anything to do with the brand's Countryman crossover—which is still based on the last-generation Mini. Objectively, four doors beat two, and at only \$1000 more, the 4 Door isn't bad value. But it's not as charming in the looks department, where Mini has always been among the biggest players. —CHRIS CHILTON

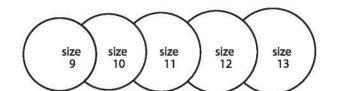




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DRIVES



[2015]

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6-speed manual

WEIGHT 3960 lb

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2.5-liter I-4, 200 hp,

AT SOME POINT, YOU COME TO GRIPS with the fact that you need a truck. Driving your track rat six hours to VIR may have been okay when it was also your only mode of transportation. Perhaps as you've matured, however, you've come to appreciate finery like air conditioning, a radio, and maybe even a headliner. Modern full-size pickups like the Ford F-150, the Chevy Silverado, and the Ram 1500 can

tow your entire house to Tibet and back, but God help you if you have to traverse a packed Whole Foods parking lot. The solution? A truck that fits the job.

The 2015 Chevrolet Colorado and the mechanically identical GMC Canyon represent the first real effort in the mid-size truck seg-

ment in some 20 years. With a maximum tow rating of 7000 pounds and all the refinement of the full-size pickups, the new GM trucks can merrily shuck you and a toy to the track and

back without drawing lesser planetary bodies into their orbits.

We'd opt for the 3.6-liter V-6 over the base 200-hp, 2.5-liter, direct-injected four-cylinder. This is the same quad-cam, direct-injected V-6 that normally finds itself putting power to the front wheels of any number of General Motors sedans, but intake and exhaust tuning as well as a few calibration tweaks help it turn out 305 hp

at 6800 rpm and 269 lb-ft of torque at 4000 rpm in this application.

Those numbers fall short of the engine's output in the other 3.6-liter, V-6-powered, rear-drive Chevy, the Camaro, where it makes 323 hp and 278 lb-ft. The engine still likes to rev, but the torque peak in the Colorado arrives 800 rpm

sooner and there's more low-end pull.

A six-speed automatic transmission and substantial aero work, including active grille shutters, help the four-wheel-drive, V-6 Colorado return 20 mpg combined. That's 3 mpg better than an equivalent Nissan Frontier, but the number bests a V-6, four-wheel-drive Silverado by only 1 mpg. If you're basing your decision on fuel-economy ratings alone, there's not much incentive to buy the Colorado. That said, the smaller truck doesn't give up much ground to its larger sibling in capability. The full-size V-6 Silverado's tow rating is a paltry 400 pounds more than the V-6 Colorado's.

Indeed, the Colorado is a real truck in rational proportions. There's room inside for four grown adults, and a maximum payload of 1590 pounds in four-wheel-drive guise means the smaller truck is more capable than most buyers will ever need.

It's been a while since Toyota and Nissan gave their mid-size trucks a polish, and the Colorado's interior shines a harsh light on that fact. Good materials, a massive touch-screen, and a quiet cabin all make the Colorado feel two decades younger than its rivals. A suite of electronic nannies, including lane-departure warning and forward collision alert, makes this a fully modern vehicle. For the first time, you can get a mid-size truck that's more than a decontented dinosaur.

All the cabin fanciness hasn't disguised the fact that this is still a truck. Live rear axle? Tall driving position? Big, squared-off nose? Yes, yes, and yes, and they all make the Colorado feel just like its big brother. This isn't a crossover, nor is it a pint-sized S-10—we yanked 4500 pounds worth of boat and trailer up and down the hills leading from the coast north of San Diego up to Rancho Santa Fe, and the truck never seemed taxed.

Pricing starts at \$20,995, though a well-equipped Z71 with the V-6, four-wheel drive, a crew cab, and a long bed costs about \$35,000. Chevy expects the average transaction price to be between \$5000 and \$8000 less than the Silverado line—not a huge savings. If you were expecting a return to the era of the cheap pickup, sorry—that epoch is over in every way.

There's something to be said for the right tool for the job at hand, and if that job's a daily commute with the occasional towing stint, we'd have a hard time suggesting anything else.

-ZACH BOWMAN





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[2016]

Mercedes-Benz S550 Hybrid

SUBTLETY SAVES.



HERE'S THAT FOUR-DOOR SMART CAR Americans have been asking Daimler for. Unlike the actual Smart car, the smartness of the six-cylinder S550 Hybrid lies not in its size, but in how it imitates a V-8-powered S550 while drinking fuel like a four-cylinder.

As far as plug-in hybrids go, the S550's mechanicals are straightforward: Mercedes's new twin-turbo V-6 sends power to a seven-speed automatic, with an electric motor and a couple of clutches sitting between. Hop in and treat the big Benz like a normal car, and it mostly feels like one: The hybrid S550 decides when to use electric power, its engine, or a mix, based on speeds and route topography. (Example: The car will purposely drain its battery on the way up a grade, knowing there's a refill coming on the way down.)

Unlike most hybrids, the brakes here aren't inconsistent in feel. Regenerative braking mimics engine braking when you lift the throttle, transitioning to full regen only once the brake pedal is pressed. Come off the brakes, and the car removes regen gradually and gently. The S550 Hybrid will do around 20 miles under electric power alone, and an indicated 40 mpg is possible in normal driving. Which makes the hybrid S-class smart, but not so you'd notice. Which is kind of the point. —DAVID GLUCKMAN



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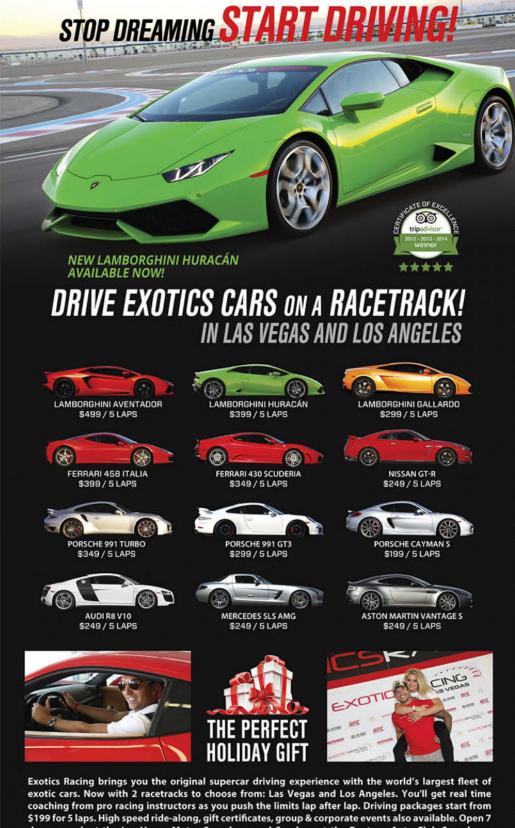
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| | the Mails Including Sales | | |
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| | and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS® | 30.180 | 30.900 |
| | | 30,100 | 30,900 |
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| | (e.g., First-Class Mail) | n/a | n/a |
| c. | Total Paid Distribution | | |
| | (Sum of 15b [1], [2], [3], and [4]) | 508,687 | 495,535 |
| d. | Free or Nominal Rate Outside-Cour | nty | |
| | Copies included on PS Form 3541 | 74,107 | 71,965 |
| | [2] Free or Nominal Rate In-County | | |
| | Copies Included on PS Form 35 | 641 n/a | n/a |
| | [3] Free or Nominal Rate Copies | L. | |
| | Mailed at Other Classes Throug the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail | | n/a |
| | [4] Free or Nominal Rate Distribution | | Tiya |
| | Outside the Mail |) I | |
| | (Carriers or other means) | 7,196 | 3,868 |
| e. | Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribut | tion | |
| | (Sum of 15d [1], [2], [3] and [4]) | 81,303 | 75,833 |
| f. | Total Distribution | | |
| | (Sum of 15c and 15e) | 589,990 | 571,368 |
| g. | Copies not Distributed | 94,537 | 99,133 |
| h. | Total (Sum of 15f and g) | 684,527 | 670,501 |
| i. | Percent Paid | 00.00/ | 00.70 |
| 10 | (15c divided by 15f times 100) | 86.2% | 86.7% |
| IDa | a. Requested and Paid Electronic Copies | 28,026 | 40,000 |
| h. | Total Requested and Paid Print Cop | | 40,000 |
| υ. | and Requested/Paid Electronic Cop | | |
| | (Line 15c) | 536,713 | 535,535 |
| c. | Total Requested Copy Distribution | | |
| | (Life 15f) and Requested/Paid | | |
| | Electronic Copies | 618,016 | 611,368 |
| d. | Percent Paid and/or Requested | | |
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| 17 | Publication of Statement of Owners | | 07.00% |
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December/January-15 issue of this publication. 18. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher,

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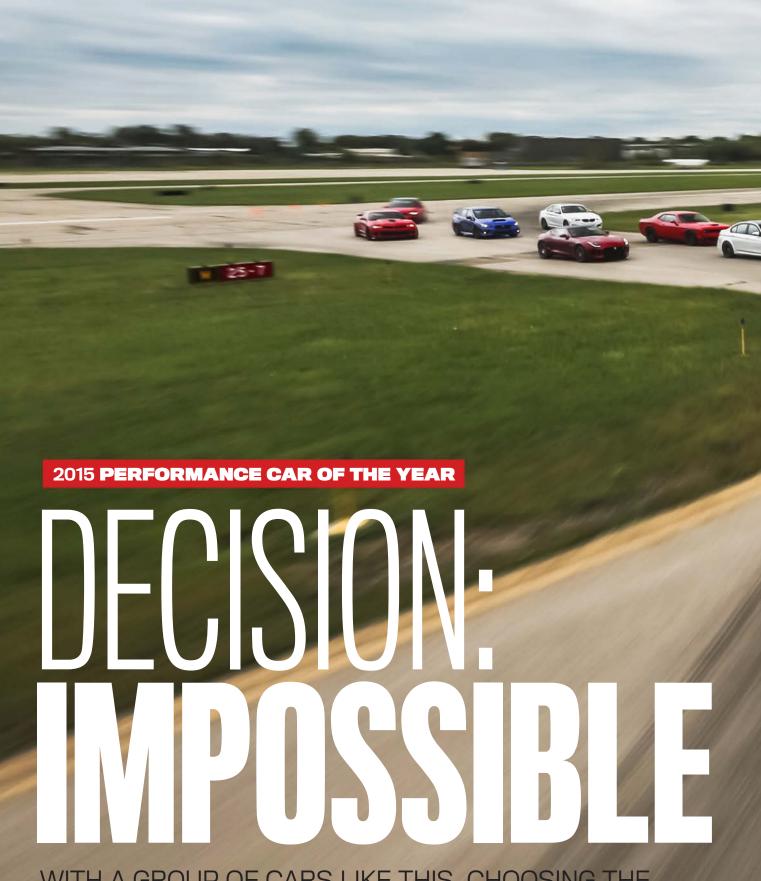












WITH A GROUP OF CARS LIKE THIS, CHOOSING THE ROAD & TRACK **PERFORMANCE CAR OF THE YEAR** WAS ANYTHING BUT EASY. NOT THAT WE MINDED.





HIS IS A QUIET, WOODED PLACE. There are no homes here, no driveways, no mechanical noises. A thick canopy of century-old oaks and maples shades the afternoon sun to a gentle twilight. A graceful young doe noses through the soft dirt, searching for acorns, her fawns nervous and unsteady beside her.

There is a road, barely two lanes, rounded on the shoulders, descending hundreds of feet in just a few miles, ragged with neglect. It cuts through a forest that has long since rejoined and blocked the sky above it.

Popping over a crest with a stutter-squeal of the ABS, a white M235i lands and settles in the road's trough, throttling down the long, gently curved descent to the next blind corner. Hot on its heels is another white car, this one with a chrome pony striding across its grille, the

rear wheels stepping out briefly over the crest before the fastback flings into the wooded tunnel ahead.

The trio of deer remains still as the train of cars hammers through. A Challenger Hellcat rips by, seemingly as big as its Grumman namesake, blowing the early leaves off the road with a rasp and a supercharged Klaxon whine that trails away, leaving the forest silent.

You can hear the 9000-rpm roar of the Ferrari 458 Speciale long before you see it. Then it appears all at once, LED marker lights haloed in the Hellcat's dust, *whomp* into the trough then *whaaaaaaaaaaa click whaaaaa* and the deer flee into the safety of the woods and the trees echo in Dolby Surround and miles away a park ranger swivels his head and without a flash of brake lights the 458 changes direction as if Alonso himself were at the wheel and the aftereffect of the noise is like that scene in *Inception* where the whole landscape folds over itself and then it's as gone as it was here.







WELCOME TO PERFORMANCE CAR OF THE YEAR. The rules of the game are simple: To be eligible, a car must be new for this year or feature significant functional changes. An example of the former: Alfa Romeo's 4C, arriving on these shores for the first time. An example of the latter: the you-can-call-it-a-Dodge-again Viper SRT TA, with a revised aero package and engine tuning. Cars that do not meet either criterion are not welcome, not even if it is last year's winner, the 2014 Corvette Z51. There's no champion's provisional.

Fourteen cars were invited to our challenge, ranging from the \$34,005 sensible-shoes Volkswagen GTI to the \$336,120 Ferrari 458 Speciale. Every one of them someone's dream car, every one outstanding in at least one empirical measure, every one special and exciting to drive. But that isn't enough to win PCOTY. That's just your buy-in. To win, a car has to deliver on every level. It has to shine on the road and shimmer around the Motown Mile, R&T's private airport test track. It has to flatter the novice driver while challenging the experienced racer. It has to offer value for money, regardless of the MSRP.

Most of all, however, the PCOTY winner has to be the look-back car. The car you want to drive again, even with 13 other brilliant automobiles surrounding it. The one that you truly want, the one you'd go into debt for. In other words, the one. And like the man said, there can be only one. So let's go.



THE 45-SECOND, ALL-YOU-NEED-TO-KNOW GUIDE TO PCOTY

What's a PCOTY? Isn't he a rapper? PCOTY (pē-kō-tē) is Road & Track's annual, glorious Performance Car of the Year test, wherein we grab a host of new, fast, fun cars and spend a week driving them everywhere from open highways to our signature, punishing Motown Mile track. (Also, you're thinking of A\$AP Rocky.)

What makes a car eligible? To quote Editor-in-Chief Larry Webster (page 12): "Every new car with sporting intent that was released or revised over the past year." From there, we ditched some on principle, some out of necessity (see below), and some because they weren't ready in time (Audi TT, Corvette ZO6). When multiple variants of the same car—Mustang GT versus Mustang EcoBoost, for example—were available, we went with the highest-performance version. Naturally.

But why isn't [Car X] on this list?! Several possibilities: One, it's not actually new (see above). Two, you need to recalibrate your idea of "performance car" (the ad boys lied to you, Nissan Altima owners). Three, it's a milliondollar spaceship (amazing, yes; relevant, no), or four, the manufacturer declined to participate (looking at you, Lamborghini and McLaren).

But what about the BMW i8? I love the BMW i8! You've ruined my life! BMW told us, essentially, "it's not a car we want on track." We were interested; they weren't.

Should I maybe calm down and enjoy the story even if a newish car I love isn't here?

A bit, yes. Thanks.

How does a car win PCOTY? It displays the most potent mix of emotion, performance, and value—in that order. Brute speed doesn't automatically trump engagement, but the title won't go to a talkative tortoise, either. And if one car provides the thrills of a competitor but costs less, it gets extra points. Why wouldn't it?

THE CONTENDERS







2015 **BMW M3**



| PRICE, BASE | |
|------------------|--|
| PRICE, AS TESTED | |
| LAYOUT | |
| ENGINE | |
| POWER | |
| TORQUE | |
| TRANSMISSION | |
| WEIGHT | |
| L x W x H (IN) | |
| 0-60 MPH | |

0-1/4-MILE

PCOTY PEDIGREE

| 2015 ALFA ROMEO 4C |
|--------------------------|
| \$55,195 |
| \$69,945 |
| mid-engine, RWD |
| 1.7-liter turbo I-4 |
| 237 hp |
| 258 lb-ft |
| 6-speed dual-clutch auto |
| 2455 lb |
| 157.5 x 73.5 x 46.6 |
| 4.2 sec |
| 12.9 sec @ 107.8 mph |

| 2015 BMW M235 i |
|----------------------------|
| \$44,050 |
| \$44,550 |
| front-engine, RWD |
| 3.0-liter turbo I-6 |
| 320 hp |
| 330 lb-ft |
| 6-speed manual |
| 3511 lb |
| 174.5 x 69.8 x 55.8 |
| 4.6 sec (est) |
| 13.3 sec @ 106.0 mph (est) |
| |

| \$62,950 |
|---|
| \$81,425 |
| front-engine, RWD |
| 3.0-liter twin-turbo I-6 |
| 425 hp |
| 406 lb-ft |
| 6-speed manual |
| 3540 lb |
| 184.5 x 73.9 x 56.1 |
| 3.9 sec |
| 12.3 sec @ 114.9 mph |
| Touring-car legend's fiftl generation goes turbo. |

| 2014 CHEVROLET CAMARO Z/28 | |
|---|--|
| \$75,000 | |
| \$75,000 | |
| front-engine, RWD | |
| 7.0-liter V-8 | |
| 505 hp | |
| 481 lb-ft | |
| 6-speed manual | |
| 3856 lb | |
| 192.3 x 76.9 x 52.4 | |
| 4.0 sec | |
| 12.2 sec @ 118.3 mph | |
| Epic LS7 small-block; GT2- esque Nürburgring lap time. | |
| | |





Carbon-fiber Cayman-fighter with Ferrari aesthetics.



Rear-drive BMW sport compact that's still actually compact.





| 2015 DODGE CHALLENGER SRT HELLCAT | 2015 DODGE VIPER SRT TA |
|--|---|
| \$60,990 | \$101,000 (est) |
| \$62,080 | \$103,000 (est) |
| front-engine, RWD | front-engine, RWD |
| 6.2-liter supercharged V-8 | 8.4-liter V-10 |
| 707 hp | 645 hp |
| 650 lb-ft | 600 lb-ft |
| 6-speed manual | 6-speed manual |
| 4458 lb | 3364 lb |
| 197.5 x 75.7 x 55.7 | 175.7 x 76.4 x 49.1 |
| 3.9 sec | 3.4 sec |
| 12.0 sec @ 124.8 mph | 11.6 sec @ 126.7 mph |
| Seven hundred and seven horsepower. Full stop. | Ever-potent Viper TA, now with chassis and drivetrain tweaks. |

| 2014 FERRARI 458 SPECIALE |
|---|
| \$298,094 |
| \$336,120 |
| mid-engine, RWD |
| 4.5-liter V-8 |
| 597 hp |
| 398 lb-ft |
| 7-speed dual-clutch auto |
| 3199 lb |
| 180.0 x 76.8 x 47.4 |
| 3.0 sec |
| 11.1 sec @ 125.7 mph |
| Forget LaFerrari, this is what Maranello's really all about. |
| |

| 2015 FORD MUSTANG GT |
|-----------------------------|
| \$32,925 |
| \$45,885 |
| front-engine, RWD |
| 5.0-liter V-8 |
| 435 hp |
| 400 lb-ft |
| 6-speed manual |
| 3806 lb |
| 188.3 x 75.4 x 54.4 |
| 4.5 sec |
| 13.0 sec @ 112.0 mph |
| The archetypal pony car, |

| 2015 JAGUAR F-TYPE R COUPE |
|---|
| \$99,925 |
| \$105,875 |
| front-engine, RWD |
| 5.0-liter supercharged V-8 |
| 550 hp |
| 502 lb-ft |
| 8-speed automatic |
| 3929 lb |
| 176.0 x 75.7 x 52.0 |
| 3.7 sec |
| 11.9 sec @ 122.7 mph |
| Toothsome shape, raucous soundtrack, oversteer fetish |











| 2015 LEXUS RC F | 2015 NISSAN GT-R NISMO | 2014 PORSCHE 911 GT3 | 2015 SUBARU WRX STI | 2015 VOLKSWAGEN GOLF GTI | |
|--|---|---|--|---|--|
| \$63,325 | \$151,585 | \$132,395 | \$35,290 | \$25,215 | |
| \$73,225 | \$151,880 | \$145,785 | \$38,190 | \$34,005 | |
| front-engine, RWD | front-engine, AWD | rear-engine, RWD | front-engine, AWD | front-engine, FWD | |
| 5.0-liter V-8 | 3.8-liter twin-turbo V-6 | 3.8-liter H-6 | 2.5-liter turbo H-4 | 2.0-liter turbo I-4 | |
| 467 hp | 600 hp | 475 hp | 305 hp | 220 hp | |
| 389 lb-ft | 481 lb-ft | 325 lb-ft | 290 lb-ft | 258 lb-ft | |
| 8-speed automatic | 6-speed dual-clutch auto | 7-speed dual-clutch auto | 6-speed manual | 6-speed dual-clutch auto | |
| 4039 lb | 3880 lb | 3269 lb | 3375 lb | 3150 lb (est) | |
| 185.2 x 72.6 x 54.7 | 184.3 x 74.6 x 54.2 | 178.9 x 72.9 x 50.0 | 180.9 x 70.7 x 58.1 | 168.0 x 70.8 x 56.8 | |
| 4.3 sec | 2.8 sec | 3.1 sec | 4.8 sec | 5.8 sec | |
| 12.7 sec @ 113.0 mph | 11.0 sec @ 126.6 mph | 11.3 sec @ 123.4 mph | 13.3 sec @ 102.8 mph | 14.4 sec @ 98.7 mph | |
| First Lexus sports coupe since the exotic LFA. | Japan's supercar-slaying techno-marvel, highly evolved. | The hard-core 911 for people who love 911s. | Three rally titles in its bloodline (and the rear wing to prove it). | The definitive sports hatch, all things to all enthusiasts. | |





AST YEAR, ONLY THE TOP SIX PCOTY CONTENDERS

earned a trip to our road-test loop in the leafy crucible of Ohio's Hocking Hills. This year, we started the proceedings here, in recognition of the fact that our readers spend most of their time without magnetic numbers

on their doors. And hey, the magazine's called *Road & Track*, not *Track & Paddock*.

Though we have Art Director Matt Tierney and snapper Marc Urbano in a Grand Cherokee for logistical support, there's not enough room in the Jeep for all the preconceptions we've brought with us.

When lunch formally ends, there's a bit of a Le Mans-style running start for cars that everyone expects to shine on the 1000-foot climb to the Cantwell Cliffs and beyond. No surprise that the M235i has a few people tugging on the door handle.

"Great pull, even in the lower rev range . . . this is the appropriatesize BMW. I'm glad it exists," says Road Test Editor Robin Warner, and later, at dinner, that statement gets a universal nod of the heads. Over the off-camber hills and dips, the Bimmer steps its tail out in thrilling but controllable fashion.

On that long, tree-canopied downhill run, however, the M235i feels short on brakes, and I get the distinct feeling that there's a bit too much dignity, too much ball-bearing smoothness, to make this a true successor to the raucous 135i. Web Editor Alex Kierstein agrees. "Good mechanical grip. No drama... sadly, no drama."

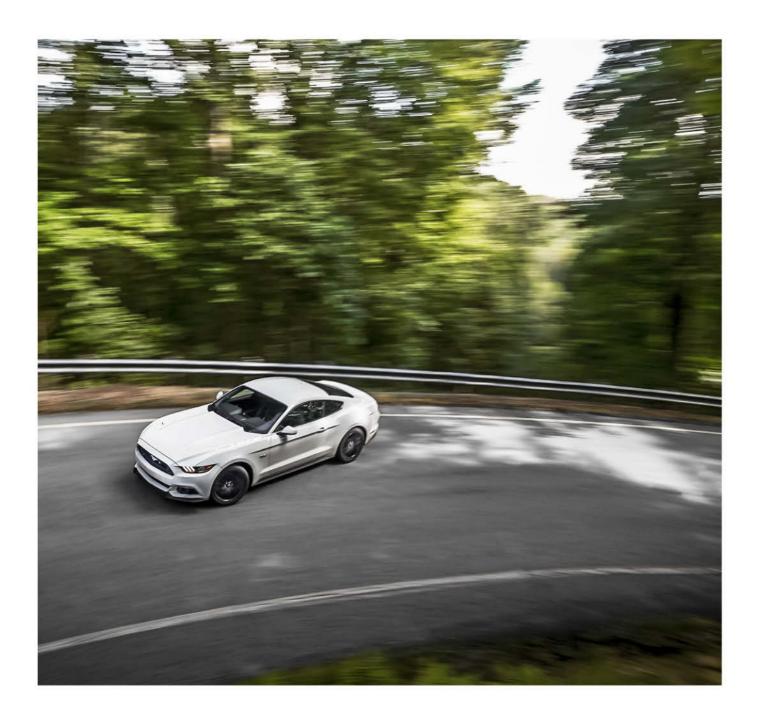
From the M235i, I jump into the M3. If, as some pundits charge, the M3's become a German answer to the Pontiac Trans Am, this is surely Munich's take on the rip-snorting, 400-cube, screaming-chicken variant used by the Bandit almost 40 years ago. It's a muscle car par excellence, warping the trees around its head-up display with what feels like an unlimited reserve of force.

But is it too quick? Senior Editor Jason Cammisa thinks so. "This car is nauseatingly fast. It's also unacceptably traction-compromised. Reducing torque output by 150 lb-ft would do wonders here." He might be right. This car requires rheostat-precise use of the throttle to avoid unpredictable yaw. Or you can just leave the BMW's electronic nannies on, which might be smarter. Two or three generations ago, the M3 gave up on the idea of being the perfect modern 2002tii and decided instead to focus on power and track pace. If that's what you want, it's all here.

When Executive Editor Sam Smith pulls up in the Ford Mustang GT, he's grinning like the canary-swallowing cat. "I don't want to say anything, don't want to influence you, but—" Hush, Smith! Let me try it for myself. Okay, the 32-valve Coyote V-8 is as brilliant as it ever was,

IT'S NOT SURPRISING
THAT THE ALFA AND
BMW ARE BRILLIANT
ON THESE ROADS.
THE REAL SHOCK?
HOW MUCH FUN—
AND SPEED—YOU
CAN WRING OUT OF
THE 305-HP WRX STI.





but when the road starts twisting and falling beneath the Mustang's wheels, the car reveals a depth of competence and personality its predecessors didn't know was possible. The damping: brilliant, letting the chassis move in a way that rewards and demonstrates enthusiasm without ever getting out of hand. The steering feel: leagues better than what pony cars traditionally have, capable of communicating minute differences in available grip without kickback or grittiness. It's BMW steering, the kind you don't get in a BMW anymore.

Even the brakes are reasonable, halting the GT without much drama or pedal fade. All the parts here are good, and their sum is even better. The Ford shrinks around the driver at speed. But not everyone is convinced. "Big, bouncy, truckish gearbox," says Senior Editor Josh Condon. "Feels like the old one," Editor-in-Chief Larry Webster notes, in a way that indicates it's not a compliment.

Stepping into—well, falling into—the low-slung Alfa Romeo 4C after the Mustang shows that there's at least one properly sized sporting car for sale in the United States. On layout, weight, and simplicity alone, the Alfa makes fast friends. But Smith and I both wonder if the

THE MUSTANG'S STEERING IS LEAGUES BETTER THAN TRADITIONAL PONY CARS'. IT'S BMW STEERING, THE KIND YOU DON'T GET IN A BMW ANYMORE.

ABOVE: THE ALL-NEW MUSTANG, DOING ITS THING. LEFT: CONDON LOOKING HAWKISH AT THE HELM OF THE NOW AUTOMATIC-ONLY GT3. WANT TO KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO DRIVE AT LE MANS? A SCREAMING, 9000-RPM UPSHIFT IN A 911 IS HALF THE BATTLE.



THE ALFA IS A CLUTCH PEDAL SHORT OF BEING THE BEST MID-ENGINE SPORTS CAR IN THE WORLD. IT'S A LITTLE TIKES FERRARI 458.

> ABOVE: THE ALFA ROMEO'S EXCELLENT CHASSIS AND PURE STEERING MADE IT A ROADGOING FAVORITE. OPPOSITE: THE M3 IS NOW A FULL-ON BAVARIAN MUSCLE CAR WITH COLOSSAL FIREPOWER; TAKING A MOMENT TO WATCH THE SUN SET ON THE BEST R35 GT-R YET.

execution isn't as pure or as brilliant as the concept. Still, it's the only one here without power steering. Isn't that worth something?

Cammisa's not concerned with quibbles like that: "The 4C is the only car here not pretending to be anything but what it is: a sports car. A stunningly beautiful, bare-bones, fast car. A clutch pedal short of being the best mid-engine sports car in the world—it's a Little Tikes Ferrari 458."

To test this theory, I drive the Alfa back-to-back with the Ferrari 458 Speciale—and damn it, Cammisa's not entirely wrong. The problem is that the 4C's chassis is hamstrung by an engine and transmission that seem determined to be in the wrong gear and the wrong part of the boost curve as often as possible. Beautiful and just as responsive as you could want, the Alfa feels weak-hearted.

That is not an accusation that anyone will ever level against the Ferrari. Every superlative you've ever read about a road-car engine is rendered trivial by this 597-hp tornado, the world-record holder for specific output in a naturally aspirated roadgoing vehicle, and approximately as subtle as a shotgun blast to the solar plexus. Not a

fraction of potential power is wasted on things like flywheel weight or noise reduction. To sit in the Speciale is to be under the thrall of a roar that numbs your ears and vibrates every tendon in your body to a painful pitch.

But the pace. My God, the pace. We find an empty, newly paved road that ends in a gravel pit. A road to nowhere, difficult and slippery, without a single sign to warn of the right-angle turns after each blind hill—and the 458 simply monsters it. With the wheel-mounted *manettino* set to Race, the exhaust becomes virtually transparent and the time in each gear dwindles to the space of a breath. With each flick of the annoying, column-mounted paddles, the Speciale spins the tires briefly, then widescreens the landscape into a blur. You're sitting over the front axle, there's nothing between you and the experience. No matter what it costs, it's value for money, because until now you'd have needed a race-prepped Berlinetta Boxer to get this kind of high-speed Italian drama.

I'm still shaking when I return to the rendezvous point, just in time to interrupt a discussion about the Dodge Hellcat. "Pure, classic muscle-car schlock," argues Kierstein, and there's a lot of nodding. This is the car that feels most boulevard-bound, most out of place in the 15-mph corners. Yet there's universal admiration for the power and the brakes. Get out of the corner, straighten the wheel, and nothing satisfies like the Hellcat. "Sadly," Cammisa notes, "it's geared like so many other 600-plus-horsepower, rear-drive cars, which means the 0–60 run is accomplished in first gear, and you'll hit 89 mph in second." The verdict: a guilty pleasure, but a pleasure nonetheless.

Driving the Hellcat makes the Chevrolet Camaro Z/28 feel a bit underpowered. Welcome to 2014, where 505 hp doesn't raise any eyebrows. Past tests have told us the Camaro will do the business on the track, but here in the hills, it has few friends. "Feels like I'm driving an SCCA GT1 car out here," Webster gripes, and Smith agrees: "It seems a million miles wide." Yet when I ask it to handle the toughest challenge these roads offer—two off-camber, first-gear near-hairpins connected by a pine-needle-strewn straight—the Z/28 responds with controllable, inch-perfect aplomb. Don't count it out.

The un-American takes on the pony-car formula, the Jaguar



F-type R Coupe and the Lexus RC F, should attract the same customer in a similar fashion. Surprisingly, not a single staffer fails to articulate a distinct favorite between the two. On Team Lexus: Kierstein, Webster, and a few others. The interior's laser-cut precision, the undeniable caviar quality of the engine's broad powerband, and the rather astounding ability of the suspension to provide magic-carpet ride and max-g grip in a single package. For others, including myself, the F-type takes it. There's just so much power, so much adjustability at speed ("The rear's on casters!" Cammisa laughs), and did I mention the power? "Sounds so good I felt guilty," Senior Editor John Krewson admits. "I love this car . . . in small increments," RoadandTrack.com Editorial Director Alex Núñez says.





HELLCAT, VIPER, Z/28: 1857 CUMULATIVE HORSEPOWER, AND PROOF THAT WE LIVE IN A TIRE-MELTING GOLDEN AGE.

Like the E-types of old, this is fast and thrilling and a certain kind of unsophisticated. What you want from a Jag and no more. But when I give the R Coupe full throttle over a series of whoops and increasing-radius turns, it's positively

Supermarine, just like the roadster we had in last year's PCOTY testing. But more, and better, and Team Lexus can go to hell. You have to respect the fact that Jaguar didn't compromise on the looks or the power or the expert-level dynamics. Let's be stereotypical for a moment: This is what people once called a man's car, but it's also hugely attractive to women.

The STI and GTI are the most unlikely of fellow travelers, but time has blunted the Subaru's 305-hp muscle with size and weight, even as the GTI has been cutting pounds and adding seemingly underrated horsepower. When Smith and I take the pair for a quick run up and down the "staircase" on Route 374, we expect the sedan to walk the hatch, and it does. But not by much. The Subaru remains a hell of a lot

of fun. "I got out of this wearing a Keanu Reeves *whoa*-face," says Condon. "Steering feel is great," Warner gushes, and I agree. No longer fast by modern standards, the STI remains satisfying.

The GTI, on the other hand . . . "Without a second's hesitation, this is the car in this group that each of us would buy with our own money," Cammisa says. In an assemblage of cars costing up to nine times its MSRP, the VW impresses in every respect, from interior quality to the idiot-proof, lift-throttle yaw control that's available at speeds from mild to felonious. No other car here gives you as much confidence approaching an unknown corner; no other car has this kind of broad zone between the onset of tire squeal and the fear of impending doom. You can push it. Hard.

Which leaves just the trio of not-quite-supercars for our consideration. First up: the Nissan GT-R Nismo. There simply isn't a faster way to cover unfamiliar pavement, and although you'll pay twice the retail of the original R35 for this ridiculously striped variant, the juice is worth the squeeze. You can't fluster this car. The minute you can see the exit of a turn, simply floor the throttle; the Nissan will do the







370Z° NISMO° FROM RED LIGHT TO REDLINE.

Introducing the 2015 370Z NISMO Coupe. Equipped with new 19" NISMO forged alloy road wheels by RAYS* and new Recaro* seats with Alcantara* inserts, it'll redefine what you think of as "cornering." Add our legendary 350-hp 3.7-liter DOHC V6 engine with an H-configuration exhaust system, along with new front and rear fascias inspired by the GT-R*NISMO, and it's easy to see that we've injected it with more NISMO than ever before.

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math and take care of the rest, leaving even the Ferrari gasping for air behind it. Later, at dinner, I'll ask the group which car covers the most real-world ground in the least amount of time, and the vote will be unanimous: Nissan.

The Viper, by contrast, feels like a chore to many. "Sounds like a dump truck," chuckles Núñez, before conceding that "this is going to be the balls on the track." "Nothing about this car appeals to me but the speed," complains Associate Editor Max Prince. But Smith ("Jittery, trucklike war cannon that I can't like . . . why do I love it so much?") and Webster ("No right being as good as it is") at least respect it. As for me, I've loved the Viper as both a track and street proposition for years, and when I manage to put this one four wheels in the air at a truly indecent speed, smacking the nose hard enough on landing to toss my notebook into the cargo area, yet without losing a fraction of pace or momentum, my affection remains as strong as ever.





Everybody else is in love with the new, 991-generation Porsche GT3. Condon calls it "telepathic," while Kierstein offers "stellar." "This is what a 911 should feel like," Warner says. Driving the Ferrari and the Porsche back-to-back, most staffers feel they're getting more out of the latter. On roads this relentless, the GT3's PDK automatic transmission keeps the engine up in the rev range, delivering a spine-chilling tribute to the whoop of its air-cooled ancestors every time you nail the throttle. Then it's on to the peerless brakes and through the turn with no drama but plenty of neck-straining grip. More emotion than the GT-R, less work than the Viper, more comfy than the Ferrari. It's the belle of the ball.

If we voted right now, without the cruel concrete of the Motown Mile to expose on-limit behavior and trivialize power curves the way a track always does? The Alfa's got a lot of fans, as does the Mustang. The Ferrari is too fast for even the fastest roads. There are whispers that the GTI might take the prize, if only it retains its charm around the Mile's blue landing lights. Whatever. Talk is cheap. Track time is money. Time to head north.

MORE EMOTION THAN
THE GT-R, LESS WORK
THAN THE VIPER, MORE
COMFY THAN THE FERRARI.
THE PORSCHE 911 GT3 IS
THE BELLE OF THE BALL.

ABOVE: WONDROUSLY FAST, RUINOUSLY EXPENSIVE, AND VERY RED, THE 458 SPECIALE KNOWS NOT OF SUBTLETY, WHILE THE GT3 (LEFT) IS A COOL, COMPOSED, BEST-OF-ALL-WORLDS CHAMPION.



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The Stauer Metropolitan retains all the hallmarks of a well-bred wristwatch including a gold-finished case, antique ivory guilloche face, blued Breguet-style hands, an easy-to-read date window at the 3 o'clock position, and a crown of sapphire blue. It secures with a crocodilepatterned, genuine black leather strap and is water resistant to 3 ATM.

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THIS PAGE, FROM
TOP: THE OPENING
HEAVENS; LINING UP
FOR TAKEOFF; MUSTANG
SPEEDOMETER; 707HP HELLCAT SHOWS
OFF; SMITH FILLS IDLE
PHOTO-SHOOT HOURS BY
TURNING HIS SANDWICH
INTO A TWITTER STAR;
PHOTOGRAPHER URBANO
GETS A LOOK AT THE
LADDER-IN-A-TRUCK
IDEA, DECIDES WE'RE ALL
IDIOTS; BURNOUT BOX.

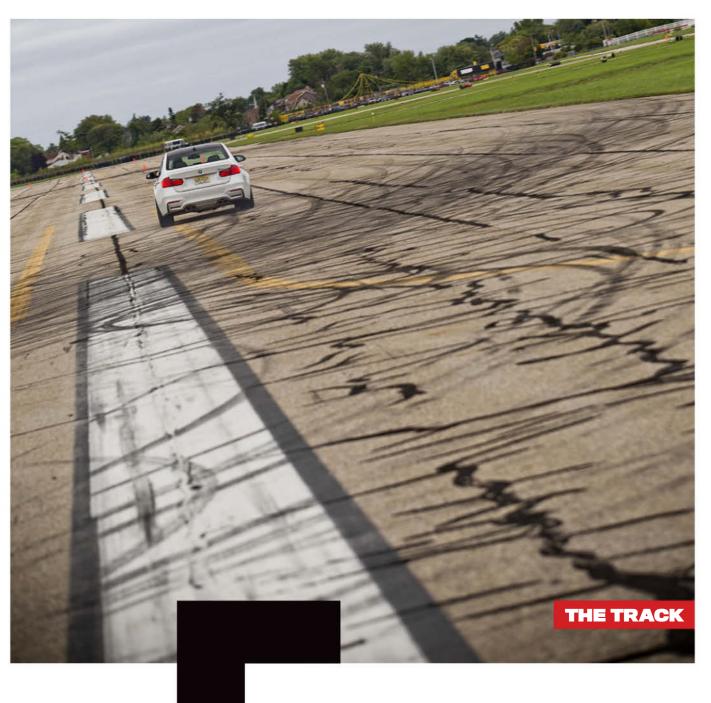




PCOTY ISN'T ABOUT LAP TIMES, BUT WE NEED THE MOTOWN MILE, TO SHOW US WHAT THESE CARS CAN DO IN CONTROLLED, REPEATABLE CONDITIONS.







ALL IN MICHIGAN MEANS THE WEATHER is anything but predictable. Over the next two days, we'll see a 30-degree swing in temperature, a massive storm that sweeps traffic off the road and forces our 14 contenders to huddle behind the cracked windows of an ancient hangar, and the kind of unrelenting sun that makes all but the most dedicated racers present run the A/C on the track. Yet there's still time for everyone to get their laps in. The results of timed lapping don't surprise us: The Ferrari is fastest, followed by the GT-R and GT3. As president of the R&T Viper Fan Club (and a member, too!) I feel compelled to note that the gap between the GT3 and the snake is less than the time required to make one of the Viper's manual shifts.

PCOTY isn't about lap time, though—and why should it be, when even a vintage SCCA sports racer can smoke supercars around a road course? But we need the Motown Mile, to show us what these cars can do in controlled, repeatable, non-pedestrian-endangering conditions.

The Alfa should shine here; it's the lightest car in the test and it's not short on tire. But the short straights of the Mile expose

BE IT A WILD, TRACK-FOCUSED EXOTIC OR A POLISHED GERMAN SPORT SEDAN, THE MOTOWN MILE—OUR ROUGH, RUTTED, AND REMORSELESS AIRPORT TEST TRACK—WILL UNMASK ANY CAR'S FLAWS.





FROM TOP: SAFETY
FIRST; "LANDING
LIGHTS COST \$5000
EACH TO REPLACE.
DON'T HIT THEM," SAYS
WEBSTER; MUSTANG
SALLIES FORTH;
HOLDING PATTERN.
OPPOSITE: VIPER
HITS MAIN RUNWAY
AT FULL ATTACK,
VIPER PASSENGER
CONTEMPLATES THE
MEANING OF LIFE.









weaknesses in powertrains the way Hamlet stabbed Polonius through the curtain, and there's no place for the 4C's awkward transmission to hide. By noon on the first day, the Alfa is mostly sitting idle as drivers gravitate for repeat sessions in more entertaining contenders.

Sadly, the Hellcat sits, too. "Feels like I'm in an SUV," Webster grumbles. Yet I take it as a challenge to hold the right pedal down past the Kink on the Mile's front straight. I unwind in a hurry from the back corner, using the throttle to speed the process, and for the next five seconds, I'm just a passenger, a kid riding a Radio Flyer wagon that happens to have a General Electric J79 turbojet tied to the back. This will put hair on your chest. Recommended.

A similar experience, albeit with better seats and the excellent Mark Levinson stereo, should be available in the Lexus RC F.

LEXUS RC F: LOOKS 4, DANCE 10. THE CAR'S INTERIOR IS AS LOW-KEY AND CHARMING AS ITS EXTERIOR IS NOT. BELOW: HELLCAT SEE PAVEMENT. HELLCAT SMASH PAVEMENT. ARRRG! HELLCAT SMASH!



THE HELLCAT WILL PUT HAIR ON YOUR CHEST. RECOMMENDED.



Unfortunately, it isn't, thanks to a cowardly stability-control computer that never stops nannying and can't be disengaged. The number of ways in which the Lexus will sabotage your lap is legion. I take a rerun, because I initially can't get the car to shift at redline, permit minor slip angles, and/or play Guns N' Roses without warning me that my feelings were at risk. "It won't do a burnout!" Cammisa moans. It also won't permit any of the tomfoolery for which its IS F predecessor was famous.

Thus, Team Lexus loses fans, but does Team Jaguar gain them? "Nice, balanced, effortlessly fast" is Núñez's verdict on the F-type. "I don't get a sports-car vibe. As an owner, I wouldn't track it," replies Kierstein. "You just want to drive like a ridiculous person," Condon says, but what does that mean? Think of the Jag as a speedboat: If you want it to change direction, it needs to be under power. The transmission that is so brilliant on the road feels disconnected and sullen here, the steering is slow, the car won't put down power midcorner in predictable fashion. It's simply not a track car, even in this R form.

The Camaro Z/28, of course, puts clear air between itself and the

THE NEW THINKING

ENTHUSIASTS TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT CHEVROLET VERSUS THE COMPETITION

Earlier this year we invited four Road & Track readers to take a closer look at the Chevrolet lineup, and we singled out Ben Kobrin to be our expert on the Chevy Cruze. With an all-day road trip pitting the Cruze against three other compacts, Ben experienced the difference that makes Chevrolets a great choice for enthusiasts like you—or the people who ask you for car-buying advice.

CHALLENGE FILL UP AND GO

With Ben leading the charge, our foursome set out from Midtown Manhattan (1) for a 400-mile adventure. The route included classic roadside destinations, like the Capitol Diner (2) and a giant Pagoda (3), but what Ben and the crew didn't know was that there wouldn't be any stops for fuel. That is, until the Ford Focus ran out of gas and we had to reveal the plan to our participants. At that point the trip computers in the Honda Civic and Toyota Corrola predicted a range well short of the finish line, so we topped them off as well. Thanks to its available 1.4-liter turbo engine[†] and huge 15.6-gallon fuel tank, only the Cruze made it to our final stop in Monticello (5) without filling up. And it's not just a long-cruising range that left Ben impressed: "After having driven all three other cars, the Cruze is the most well-put-together package."

OUR ENTHUSIAST BEN KOBRIN WILLIAMSTOWN, MA

TRUE STORY

Ben's first time driving a manual transmission was a crash-course on the crowded streets of Rome. "My mom sat petrified in the passenger seat as mopeds zoomed past us on all sides, but I was grinning the whole way."

TOTAL DISTANCE DRIVEN

- 1 START, NEW YORK CITY
- 2 CAPITOL DINER, HARRISBURG, PA 175 M
- 3 THE PAGODA, READING, PA 235 M
- 4 CLINTON STATION DINER, CLINTON, NJ 304 M
- 5 FINISH, MONTICELLO, NY 422 M



CRUZE-ING RANGE

If you're looking to stretch every gallon of fuel even further, the Cruze has that covered too. The Cruze Eco, with advanced aerodynamics and ultra-low rolling resistance tires, offers 42* mpg highway. Or take the 46-mpg** Cruze diesel on a trip—and go up to 717*** miles between stops.



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Keep watching for news on the Chevrolet lineup, including more special reports, enthusiast insights, and driving adventures.

CHEVROLET CRUZE CLEAN TURBO DIESEL

MPG HWW IT'S A LEAN, CLEAN DIESEL MACHINE.



2.0L Engine

DIESEL'S CLEAN SLATE

The Cruze Clean Turbo Diesel uses a Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) system to convert oxides of nitrogen into harmless nitrogen and water. The SCR system uses a Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF or AdBlue) in addition to the standard Diesel Oxidation Catalyst (DOC), which converts hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide to harmless gases. It generates at least 90% less NOx emissions than previous generation diesels. Its emissions are below strict U.S. environmental standards.



EPA-estimated 46 MPG Hwy¹

EMPHATIC ABOUT EFFICIENCY

If it's not a hybrid or an electric car, it's not getting better highway fuel economy than the Cruze Clean Turbo Diesel. Its highway fuel economy is unsurpassed among gasoline and diesel vehicles available in the U.S. The ECOTEC® 2.0L turbocharged diesel engine can go up to 717 miles on a single tank. So you won't be shortchanged at the pump or in the passing lane.



Built-in 4G LTE Wi-Fi

ADVANCEMENTS AND ENHANCEMENTS

2015 Cruze³ is the first compact car with available built-in 4G LTE Wi-Fi.⁴ It's also the first with 10 standard air bags.⁵ You'll also notice a sleek new front fascia and LED daytime running lights. And its standard features range from remote start to leather-trimmed upholstery to 17" alloy wheels.



Cruze Diesel packs more of everything into a stylish, compact frame. With SAE-certified 151 horsepower and 264 lb.-ft. of "low end" torque, you get the performance of a V6 with the efficiency of a 4-cylinder.



FIND NEW ROADS

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE 2015 CRUZE CLEAN TURBO DIESEL GO TO CHEVROLET.COM/CRUZE











pony cars, foreign or domestic, at the Mile. The Chevy's width doesn't matter here, while its chassis feels authentic and unflappable. So why is there no line to drive it, but the Mustang has people tapping their feet with impatience, waiting for their turn?

Part of it's the novelty—this is the first time any of the staff has driven the car on-track—but the rest is true virtue. An early straw poll shows that more of us feel more confident and more accomplished in the Mustang than in any other car.

Not so your humble author. For me, it's the Viper and always will be. "It kind of is a big Miata," Núñez admits, echoing something I told him before he took his laps. "Does everything you ask of it." Each input is returned with precise action; everything the car tells you is honest and true. At the limit, the Viper's the most trustworthy of the big-motor players. When this car got variable valve timing, even in its crudest form, it learned to breathe—and that made it thrilling, not just fast. And now that it has the modern electronic leashes available, it's accessible to novices. Within reason, of course. Prince takes a few laps and says, "I can go faster in everything else." It's not everyone's

taste, and it can't win this competition, because it doesn't inspire enough confidence in enough of us. But if you speak Viper, this is the best Viper yet, and it rewards at every level. Z/28'S BIG-DOLLAR TIRES AND SHOCKS HELP PRODUCE HUGE GRIP; M235i IMPRESSES DESPITE HEFTY COMPETITION.

The GT-R is quicker than the Viper, but it relies on corner-exit speed to make up for what its weight costs it in the Mile's rapid-fire chicanes. "The Nismo," Cammisa suggests, "is a stunning example of how good a car can become, dynamically, if its maker hones its tuning year after year." The GT-R gets respect, but in a heated lunchtime conversation, the staff cools on the car, citing the Nissan's bulk, F-350 Super Duty driving position, and interior aesthetic that should have been retired with the 280ZX Turbo.

The GT3, on the other hand, is becoming more popular. The charm that requires life-threatening heroics to uncover in the Hocking Hills is surprisingly accessible around the Mile. "Now it feels like a 911," Smith notes. "Stupid easy to drive," Prince says. There's a line for this one, too.

I'm not in that line. I'm driving the Ferrari, again and again. The aluminum floor, the badass flat-panel carbon-fiber doors full of handmade imperfections, the steering-wheel shift lights. You could own this car for 30 years and never be bored for a moment. You hear it in your lungs when you ease on the throttle, and it has eyeball-squashing power in a part of the tachometer that's just for decoration on the other cars. All my life, I've waited for Ferraris to be as special as their price tags, and this one is.

Yet it's a dream car for middle-aged men. The young man's dream car is sitting next to it, four-doored and big-winged in that oh-so-familiar shade of blue. The people who buy the STI don't care that the competition gets faster every year, because they're going to turn

THE 458 SPECIALE HAS
EYEBALL-SQUASHING
POWER IN A PART OF THE
TACHOMETER THAT'S
JUST FOR DECORATION
ON THE OTHER CARS.

ALL MY LIFE, I'VE WAITED FOR FERRARIS TO BE AS SPECIAL AS THEIR PRICE TAGS, AND THIS ONE IS.

up the boost themselves. (If you don't do that, then you'd better put on your turn signal when some soccer mom wants to 40-roll you in her V-6 Camry.) Still, there's pleasure to be had from noticing the very real effect that the Subaru's adjustable center differential has on cornering behavior. Behind the wheel of the STI, Prince is a bit of a terror, going very quickly. Accessible, intelligent, and still looks like a rally car.

For many staffers, the GTI stood in the long shadow of last year's PCOTY podium finisher, the Ford Fiesta ST. For the extra money Volkswagen charges—and that's not a lot—you get so much more refinement, so much more power, such a feel of prestige. What you don't get is the rabid enthusiasm that characterized early GTIs. This is a grown-up car indeed, and stellar on the road. On track, we'd rather have something else.

The M3 is the only car to actually scare me at the Motown Mile. Going around the fast final turn, the torque spikes and sends me into a long, lazy, 100-mph slide that I don't recover until well down the front straight. Forget this being a German Trans Am; it's a German Corvette. "This car is nightmarish to control under power," concurs Cammisa. "It's so much work, and there's no joy to be had as a result." Having driven the M3 before, on a larger track, I suggest that it needs a bigger venue to shine. Cammisa agrees.

The M235i commits perhaps an opposite fault: It's not vicious enough. Webster comments: "Filtered," and Krewson notes: "Power, sure. Engagement, no." That said, it's the equivalent of an L-39 Albatros for track-day drivers: fast enough to keep up with traffic, comfortable enough for the drive home, with plenty of depth to explore.

Two days, hundreds of laps, and more than a few shattered preconceptions. It doesn't come easy, but after a series of arguments that verge on personal and heated, the staff has settled on three favorites.

THE MOTOWN MILE

Road & Track's private airport track is rough and tumble by design. While mostly flat, the surface is littered with bumps, transitions, and nearly invisible camber changes that turn usually stable cars into sliding handfuls. We use the lap time and the impressions gleaned from obtaining it to present you with a clearer picture of the modern performance car. A machine quick on the Mile is a track weapon, but also adaptable, confidence-inspiring, and swift in the real world.

THE LEADERBOARD

CURRENT POOTY CONTENDERS IN RED

| 1 | 2014 FERRARI 458 SPECIALE | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| 2 | 2015 NISSAN GT-R NISMO | | |
| 3 | 2014 PORSCHE 911 GT3 | | |
| 4 | 2015 DODGE VIPER SRT TA | | |
| 5 | 2013 FERRARI F12BERLINETTA | | |
| 6 | 2014 PORSCHE 911 TURBO S | .53.02 sec | 140.5 mph |
| 7 | 2014 MERCEDES SLS AMG BLACK SERIES. | 53.66 sec | 135.8 mph |
| 8 | 2014 NISSAN GT-R TRACK EDITION | .53.76 sec | 135.6 mph |
| 9 | 2013 SRT VIPER | 54.55 sec | 138.9 mph |
| 10 | 2014 CHEVROLET CAMARO Z/28 | 54.66 sec | .131.2 mph |
| 11 | 2014 CHEVROLET CORVETTE Z51 | 54.80 sec | 135.5 mph |
| 12 | 2013 PORSCHE 911 CARRERA S | 55.03 sec | 133.5 mph |
| 13 | 2014 AUDI R8 V10 PLUS | . 55.18 sec | 135.9 mph |
| 14 | 2012 LEXUS LFA | .55.48 sec | 130.6 mph |
| 15 | 2015 BMW M3 | .55.53 sec | 132.3 mph |
| 16 | 2015 JAGUAR F-TYPE V8 S | .55.84 sec | 134.4 mph |
| 17 | 2013 CHEVROLET CAMARO ZL1 | .55.86 sec | 133.9 mph |
| 18 | 2013 BMW M6 COMPETITION PACK | .55.89 sec | 133.8 mph |
| 19 | 2015 LEXUS RC F | 56.08 sec | 128.8 mph |
| | 2013 FORD MUSTANG SHELBY GT500 | | |
| 21 | 2013 JAGUAR XFR-S | .56.33 sec | .131.6 mph |
| 22 | 2015 DODGE CHALLENGER HELLCAT | .56.37 sec | 131.5 mph |
| 23 | 2015 JAGUAR F-TYPE R COUPE | .56.37 sec | 133.5 mph |
| | 2014 PORSCHE CAYMAN S | | |
| 25 | 2015 FORD MUSTANG GT | .56.81 sec | 127.2 mph |
| 26 | 2014 CHEVROLET CAMARO SS 1LE | .56.83 sec | 126.2 mph |
| | 2013 AUDI RS5 | | |
| | 2014 ASTON MARTIN RAPIDE S | | |
| | 2014 CHEVROLET SS | | |
| | 2015 BMW M4 | | |
| | 2014 M-B E63 AMG S-MODEL WAGON | | |
| | 2014 BMW M6 GRAN COUPE | | |
| | 2014 MERCEDES CLA45 AMG | | |
| 34 | 2014 PORSCHE CAYENNE TURBO S | . 58.10 sec | 127.1 mph |
| 35 | 2012 FORD MUSTANG BOSS 302 | .58.39 sec | 124.8 mph |
| | 2015 BMW M235i | | |
| | 2014 MERCEDES S63 AMG | | |
| | 2015 ALFA ROMEO 4C | | |
| | 2014 JAGUAR F-TYPE S V6 | | |
| | 2014 BMW 435i | | |
| | 2015 SUBARU WRX STI | | |
| | 2014 MINI JOHN COOPER WORKS GP | | |
| | 2015 VOLKSWAGEN GOLF GTI | | |
| | 2014 FORD FIESTA ST | | |
| | | | |

COYOTE CORNER

This turn, named because we once nearly hit a wild canine here, is flat and tight. It pitches almost every rear-drive car sideways. None slide as eagerly and gloriously as the Jaguar.

CORNERING GRIP: Highest: 1.21 g, Viper Lowest: 0.88 g, Alfa

THE CHICANE Mustang gladly changes direction here, shocking all. TIME THROUGH SEGMENT: Quickest: 6.80 sec, GT-R

Slowest: 7.63 sec, Alfa

HOFFA BEND

Speed here relies on cleanly exiting the previous corner. Abrupt pavement drop-off at the exit punishes overdriving. The Z/28 is the master here.

SPEED THROUGH BEND: Fastest: 53.1 mph, Z/28 Slowest: 44.7 mph, Alfa

RAGGED RIDGE

Lumpy and crowned, and the grip changes every 20 feet. Some cars, like the GT-R, were barely flustered. The Viper telegraphed every bump.

THE KINK

The quickest cars navigate this at over 140 mph with the throttle floored. The GT3 whistled through comfortably. The Hellcat demanded extreme bravery.

TRACK FACTS

WOODWARD AVE.

A quick breather and perfect opportunity to check the gauges.

LOCATION: Coleman A. Young International Airport (formerly Detroit City Airport), Detroit, MI
YEAR BUILT: 1940 | SURFACE: Concrete | LENGTH: 1.1 miles

142.1 MPH

HIGHEST TOP SPEED

SET BY THE FERRARI 458 SPECIALE.
THE 2015 PCOTY AVERAGE WAS **129.7 MPH**,
WITH THE GTI THE SLOWEST, AT **112.2 MPH**.

0.18 sec

EVALUATING PCOTY CARS ON THE ROAD AND AT THE MOTOWN MILE.

GAP BETWEEN VIPER AND (THE FASTER)
GT3 AFTER ONE LAP. BLAME THE VIPER'S
MANUAL GEARBOX—1.8 SECONDS WERE
SPENT CHANGING COGS.

NUMBER OF CARS THAT BESTED THE MOTOWN MILE LAP RECORD.

BEST POWER-TO-WEIGHT RATIO:

5.2

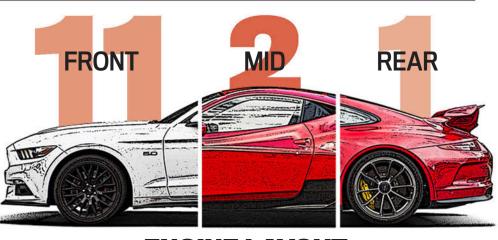
POUNDS PER HP, 2015 DODGE VIPER SRT TA.

6488

TOTAL HORSEPOWER

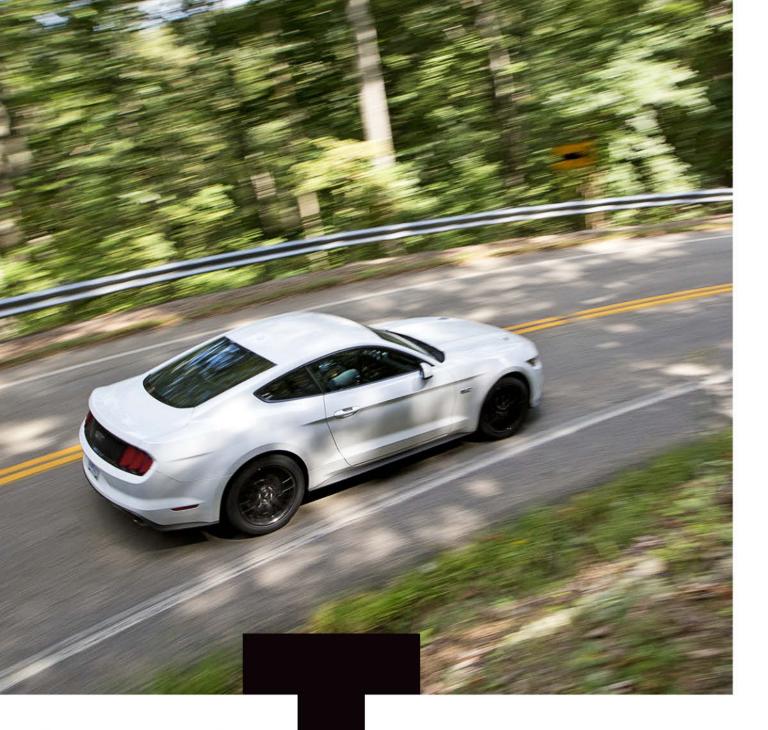
FOR THE 14 CONTESTANTS THIS YEAR, WITH A PER-CAR AVERAGE OF **463.43 HP.** WHICH IS, ASTONISHINGLY, A DECLINE FROM LAST YEAR'S AVERAGE OF **472.23 HP.**

11,830



ENGINE LAYOUT

DESPITE THE OVERWHELMING NUMBER OF FRONT-ENGINE CARS IN THE FIELD, EACH LAYOUT WAS EQUALLY REPRESENTED IN THE THREE FINALISTS.



THE FINALISTS

THE ROADS OF THE HOCKING
HILLS DON'T LIE: THE SIXTHGEN MUSTANG CAN RUN AT A
THOROUGHBRED'S PACE ALL DAY,
BUT IT'S NOW REFINED ENOUGH TO
COMPETE IN DRESSAGE, TOO.

HERE TRULY ARE NO LOSERS HERE. No, wait, scratch that. There are going to be 13 losers. But that doesn't mean that they aren't good cars. There wasn't a single entrant that didn't light someone's fire, even if those affections sometimes proved fickle. And in a few cases, most notably with the STI, Hellcat, and GT-R, the reactions from enthusiast drivers on the street proved that the Ferrari, Porsche, and Alfa didn't have all the star power in our gathering. Still, three cars put clear distance between themselves and the rest of the pack.

Let's start with the Ferrari 458 Speciale. PCOTY demands emotional involvement, and the Speciale delivers to an extent we didn't previously believe possible. It was the fastest car we've ever run around the Motown Mile, and on a back road, it's sensual and demanding all at once, like a 19-year-old mistress with a flair for screaming in public. But it was too loud and raw for most of us to take. It attracted cops and angry people in worrisome doses, and it forces its owner to be the center of attention. Driving it is like wearing a multicolored fur top hat and Bootsy Collins sunglasses: It'll definitely get you noticed, probably keep you from going home alone, but you'd better be committed.

What owners say about V1...



*** Bill P., Phoenix, AZ

Where's the radar? An arrow lights up, pointing either Ahead, to the side, or Behind. And, amazingly, it's never wrong.



Arnie R., Atlanta, GA

So easy to operate, a box with one knob. No need to poke around at full-arm's reach for little buttons the size of rice grains.



Glenna R., Dallas, TX

Love the arrows! Where's the radar? They tell me every time. How come no other detector thought of that?



Chas S., Charlotte, NC

Situation Awareness you can trust. With the Radar Locator arrowing toward threats, and the Bogey Counter telling how many threats you face, V1 makes defense easy.



A Cal L., Trenton, NJ

I've owned my V1 since 2001, and I've had it upgraded twice. I trust the arrows to point out every radar trap. When I know where, I know how to defend.



Ed H., Las Vegas, NV

How can anyone not be smitten by the Arrows? Radar ahead needs a different defense than radar behind. When I know where, I know what to do. And I can tell when I'm past the threat, too. All other detectors just beep and keep you guessing.



Rob R., Sacramento, CA

This is the slam dunk best radar detector. No databases to keep updating, or other "features" I'll never use. Instead V1 tells me the important stuff—the Bogey Counter tells you how many threats within range and the red arrows tell where they are.

Trust...V1 earns it one ambush at a time.



Harold B., Houston, TX

On my way home this afternoon I was following another detector user. I could see red blinking in his windshield as we went past the first radar. Thinking the danger was behind, Mr. Ordinary Detector User hit the gas.

Uh-Oh. V1's Radar Locator was showing two arrows, one pointing toward the trap now behind, and a second arrow ahead. The "2" on the Bogey Counter confirmed we were being double teamed.

Sure enough, Mr. O. D. User cruised into the second trap up the hill at 15 over and got himself a blue-light special.

V1 points to every trap. I trust it completely.





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EVERY SUB-\$50,000 CAR ON THE MARKET WILL HAVE TO ANSWER TO THE MUSTANG FROM NOW ON, NO MATTER WHAT BADGE IT BRINGS TO THE TABLE.

ABOVE: MUSTANG
COCKPIT KEEPS THE COZY
BUT UPS THE PRETTY.
OPPOSITE: 458 IS
INARGUABLY STRIKING,
BUT ITS LOUD, BAREBONES INTERIOR MAKES
DRIVING ANY REAL
DISTANCE A CHORE.

We also singled out the Mustang GT Coupe Premium. It's okay to believe the hype about this nearly perfected pony. It's not just the best American two-plus-two in history, it's a credible rival to the high-power European competition that sells for two or three times the price. On a back road, it's ac-

cessible and thrilling for every level of driver. Like last year's winner, the seventh-generation Corvette, it redefines what's possible at a relatively affordable price. Every sub-\$50,000 car on the market will have to answer to the Ford from now on, no matter what badge it brings to the table.

The problem, if there is one, is that this Mustang doesn't fully exploit the potential on-track brilliance of the model's new platform. That will come next year, with the flat-crank, harder-than-hard-core GT350. We're expecting great things from that car. But for now, the Mustang remains more "road" than "track."

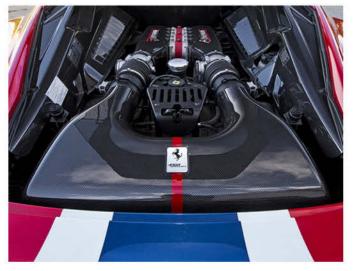


About \$400,000 would get you both Ferrari and Ford, assuming you have a solid relationship with your local dealers. You could be assured that you had the best of both worlds, and you'd never be confused as to which car was appropriate at a given time. So here's the brilliance of the Porsche GT3: Most of our staffers thought it was better around the Motown Mile than the Ferrari, and pretty much everybody thought it beat the Mustang six ways to Sunday as a street car.

Start with the way it looks: equal parts longhood 901 and Danny Ongais 934, grace and aggression in balance. Open the door, have a seat. You could drive across the country in this car and never feel resentful. There's a concert-quality stereo on the options list and three different seating options to fit your preferences. In the Hocking Hills, the GT3 demonstrated stratospheric cornering and braking limits while still managing to thrill the drivers who didn't reach for those limits. The tactile quality of the steering, the billet solidity of the brakes, the laugh that escapes everyone's lips the first time they run the tach to 9000 rpm on a two-lane: like dark chocolate, complex and satisfying.













ONE CAR LOOKED AND SOUNDED LIKE IT WAS ON FULL BOIL NO MATTER WHO WAS DRIVING. ONE CAR GAVE ITS ALL, EVERY TIME, TO EVERY DRIVER. THE PORSCHE 911 GT3 IS THE 2015 PERFORMANCE CAR OF THE YEAR.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: IT'S NO MEZGER, BUT THE GT3'S 3.8-LITER SIX IS STILL IN A LEAGUE OF IT'S OWN; BODACIOUS BEHIND, THANKS TO WIDE FLANKS AND KILLER AERO; REAR-WHEEL STEERING IS A BOON IN TIGHT CONFINES; FAMILIAR GAUGES MADE US SMILE. In Ohio, the Porsche hinted at its raw speed, but around the Mile, it went from flirtatious to furious in the blink of an eye. If you want to drive it at seven-tenths, it will blast by the majority of track-day traffic while keeping you as secure as a child in his bedtime blanket. If you want to switch off the systems and reach for the edge of the tire, it will respond with pace and limits that approach those of an IMSA Cup racer.

Perhaps the truest measure of the Porsche's brilliance was this: Over the course of two days, I stood and watched 14 different drivers run 14 different cars around the Mile. I expected everybody to get the most out of the GTI, and pretty much everybody did. I expected many of the drivers to have challenges extracting the absolute best from the Viper, and that happened as well. But there was one car that looked and sounded like it was on full boil no matter who was driving. One car that smoked by the starter's flag at full chat whether it was the old-hand racers or the new-blood writers behind the wheel. One car that gave its all, every time, to every driver. Emotion and commotion, sense and sensibility; the 911 GT3 is the 2015 Performance Car of the Year.



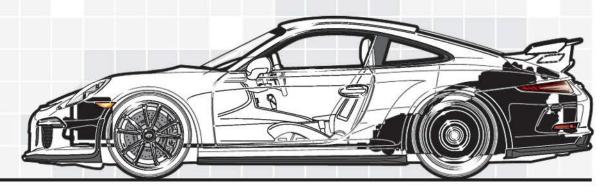






PERFORMANCE CAR OF THE YEAR

2014 **PORSCHE 911 GT3**

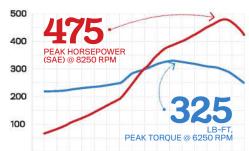


SPECIFICATIONS -

| PRICE | |
|-----------|-----------|
| BASE | \$132,395 |
| AS TESTED | \$145,785 |

ENGINE

| LAYOUT | rear, longitudinal |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| CONFIGURATION | Н-6 |
| INDUCTION | naturally aspirated |
| MATERIAL | aluminum block and heads |
| VALVETRAIN | DOHC, 24 valves |
| DISPLACEMENT | 3800 cc |
| BORE x STROKE | 102.0 x 77.5 mm |
| COMPRESSION RATIO | 12.9:1 |
| REDLINE | 9000 rpm |
| FUEL DELIVERY | directinjection |



RPM 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 8000 9K

TRANSMISSION

| DRIVEN WHEELS rear | | |
|--------------------|--------|------------------------------|
| TYPE | 7-sp | eed dual-clutch automatic |
| FINAL-DRIVE RATIO | | 3.97:1, locking differential |
| GEAR | RATIO | MAX SPEED (RPM) |
| 1 | 3.75:1 | 49 mph (9000) |
| 2 | 2.38:1 | 77 mph (9000) |
| 3 | 1.72:1 | 107 mph (9000) |
| 4 | 1.34:1 | 137 mph (9000) |
| 5 | 1.11:1 | 165 mph (9000) |
| 6 | 0.96:1 | 191 mph (9000) |
| 7 | 0.84:1 | 195 mph (8050) |

STEERING

| ASSIST | electric (all-wheel) |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| RATIO | 13.1-17.2:1 |
| TURNS, LOCK-TO-LOCK | 2.5 |
| TURNING CIRCLE | 36.4 ft |

SUSPENSION

| FRONT | strut |
|-------|-----------|
| REAR | multilink |

BRAKES & TIRES

| BRAKES, FRONT | 15.0-in vented rotors, |
|---------------|-----------------------------|
| | 6-piston fixed calipers |
| BRAKES, REAR | 15.0-in vented rotors, |
| | 4-piston fixed calipers |
| TIRES | Michelin Pilot Sport Cup 2 |
| SIZE | F: 245/35R-20 R: 305/30R-20 |

BODY & CHASSIS

| CONSTRUCTION | unit |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| MATERIAL | steel and aluminum |
| LENGTH | 178.9 in |
| WIDTH | 72.9 in |
| HEIGHT | 50.0 in |
| WHEELBASE | 96.5 in |
| TRACK F, R | 61.0, 61.2 in |
| DOORS / SEATS | 2/2 |
| EPA CLASS | 2-seater |
| CARGO CAPACITY | 9.2 ft ³ |
| DRAG COEFFICIENT × FRONTAL AR | EA0.33 x 21.9 ft ² |

WEIGHT

| CURB WEIGHT | 3269 lb |
|-------------------------|----------|
| DISTRIBUTION FRONT/REAR | 40/60% |
| WEIGHT-TO-POWER RATIO | 6.91b/hp |

FUEL

| FUEL | |
|------------------------|--------------|
| EPA CITY/HWY | 15/20 mpg |
| CAPACITY | 16.9 gallons |
| RANGE | 338 miles |
| RECOMMENDED FUEL GRADE | premium |

TEST RESULTS -

3.1

0-60 MPH, SECONDS

11.3

0-1/4 MILE, SECONDS

@ 123.4 mph

195

TOP SPEED, MPH (DRAG-LTD)



| ACCELERAT | TON | |
|---------------|-------------|-----------|
| 1 FOOT (ROLL | OUT) | 0.2 sec |
| 60 FEET | | 1.7 sec |
| ROLLING STA | RT, 5-60 | 3.9 sec |
| 1/4-MILE | 11.3 sec @ | 123.4 mph |
| 0-10 MPH | | 0.2 sec |
| 0-20 | | 0.7 |
| 0-30 | | 1.1 |
| 0-40 | | 1.7 |
| 0-50 | | 2.3 |
| 0-60 | | 3.1 |
| 0-70 | | 3.9 |
| 0-80 | | 4.9 |
| 0-90 | | 6.1 |
| 0-100 | | 7.3 |
| 0-110 | | 8.9 |
| 0-120 | | 10.6 |
| 0-130 | | 12.7 |
| 0-140 | | 15.1 |
| 0-150 | | 18.0 |
| TOP SPEED (DR | AG-LIMITED) | 195 mph |

BRAKING 60-0 MPH 102 ft 80-0 MPH 175 ft FADE none

| HANDLING | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| ROADHOLDING | 1.08 |
| BALANCE | mild understeer |

TEST NOTES

- Launch control drops the clutch from 6800 rpm. It's easy, repeatable, and devastatingly fast.
- Steering is unlike that of any other 991-chassis 911, with natural weighting and real communication. You notice nothing of the all-wheel steering, which is a good thing.
- Zero perceivable brake fade—the binders actually seem to improve when hot!





BLIZZAK WS80

Studless Ice & Snow
Coupes, Sedans, Minivans and Crossovers

Bridgestone's next-generation adaptive NanoPro-Tech Multicell compound features a water-loving hydrophilic coating and microscopic bite particles. This combination allows the Multicell compound to remain flexible in below-freezing conditions and wick water off the road to combat slipping on packed snow and ice, while

the bite particles act as microscopic studs that deliver more grip and improve braking on glare ice.*

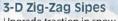
Directional Tread Design

Featuring 20% more block edges*

*compared to WS70

Circumferential and Lateral Grooves

Help channel water, slush and snow away



Upgrade traction in snow and on ice



Performance Winter / Snow Sports Cars, Coupes and Performance Sedans

A directional design with Lamellen sipes combines hydroplaning resistance with confident traction in snow and on ice.



Studless Ice & Snow Pickups, Crossover Vehicles and SUVs

Microscopic tubes and cells absorb the thin film of water on packed snow and ice while micro bite particles contribute to grip in wintry conditions.



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Ontinental 3



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Developed for the drivers of coupes, sedans and minivans, as well as pickups, crossovers and SUVs looking for traction on winter's clear, cold, slushy, snow-covered and icy roads, the ExtremeWinterContact is designed to deliver serious performance in bitter winter weather.

Asymmetric tread pattern blends dry road handling with foul-weather traction.

Low-void outboard shoulder blocks tied together by elevated lateral grooves increase dry road steering response and stability.

High-void central and inboard shoulder blocks separated by inclined longitudinal grooves provide swift removal of water, slush and snow.

High-density zigzag sipes offer multiple gripping edges to promote packed snow and ice traction.

Advanced high-tech winter tread compound remains flexible in freezing and near-freezing temperatures to enhance cold weather traction.



Install ExtremeWinterContact in sets of four only.

Due to the wintertime traction capabilities of the ExtremeWinterContact, Continental recommends using ExtremeWinterContact only in sets of four to provide the best handling characteristics and tire performance.

For up-to-date pricing and availability, call or visit tirerack.com/continental



ExtremeWinterContact tires meet the industry's severe snow service requirements and are branded with the mountain/snowflake symbol.















8 MANUFACTURERS





































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STARTING AT \$138ea.

STARTING AT \$123ea.

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SUSPENSION







































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BRIDGESTONE BLIZZAK WS80



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WINTER SOTTOZERO 3





PIRELLI

Many winter tires have limited availability. Order now for best selection!

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| 195/55 R-1/ 195/60 R-1/ 205/55 R-1/ 205/60 R-1/ 205/65 R-1/ | 5 \$86 5 94 5 91 5 99 5 99 5 99 5 94 6 109 6 123 6 105 6 106 6 106 6 110 | 225/60 225/65 235/65 205/40 205/50 215/55 215/55 215/65 225/45 225/60 225/60 225/60 | R-16 \$117 R-16 113 R-16 123 R-16 122 R-17º 135 R-17º 140 R-17 137 R-17º 160 R-17 122 R-17 159 R-17 159 R-17 163 R-17 17 163 R-17 17 17 186 R-17 17 17 186 R-17 17 186 R-17 17 186 R-17 17 186 R-17 17 187 R-17 17 187 R-17 17 188 | 235/55 235/60 235/65 245/45 P215/55 225/40 225/45 225/55 225/50 225/55 225/50 225/50 245/40 235/50 245/40 245/50 255/35 | R-17 \$150 R-17 132 R-17 129 R-17 129 R-18 170 R-18 180 R-18 170 R-18 170 R-18 177 R-18 193 R-18 193 R-18 193 R-18 193 R-18 185 R-18 201 |
|---|--|--|--|---|--|
| Blizzak WS7 185/60 R-1: 185/65 R-1: 195/60 R-1: 195/65 R-1: 205/65 R-1: 215/70 R-1: | 70 5 \$71 5 70 5 89 5 77 5 80 | 185/55 205/55 205/60 215/60 215/65 225/60 | R-16 th \$94 R-16 99 R-16 83 R-16 90 R-16 88 R-16 92 | 225/65 235/65 225/50 245/45 | R-16 \$90 R-16 95 R-17 132 R-17 142 |
| Blizzak LM- 205/55 R-1 | | 255/45 | R-18 ⁴ \$233 | 275/40 | R-19 \$305 |

| Blizzak LM-32 | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 205/55 R-16'\$131 | 255/45 R-18/\$233 | 275/40 R-19 \$305 |
| 215/45 R-17 ^{tt} 162 | 275/35 R-18 264 | 245/40 R-20 349 |
| 225/45 R-17 ^{rt} 168 | 225/40 R-19 ^{tt} 243 | 245/45 R-20 292 |
| 225/50 R-174 175 | 225/45 R-19 231 | 255/35 R-20 st 317 |
| 215/45 R-18 ^{rt} 203 | 245/40 R-19 st 263 | 295/35 R-20 ¹¹ 435 |
| 225/40 R-18 ^{rt} 193 | 245/45 R-19 ¹² 255 | RFT (Runflat) |
| 225/50 R-18 210 | 255/35 R-19 ¹² 286 | 205/55 R-16 \$165 |
| 235/40 R-18 ^{tt} 200 | 255/40 R-19 ^{tt} 274 | 225/50 R-17 203 |
| 245/45 R-18 ^{tt} 226 | 265/35 R-19 ^{rx} 311 | 225/55 R-17 194 |
| 255/40 R-18 ^{tt} 217 | 275/35 R-19 321 | |
| | | |

| ij | Blizzak | LM-25 RFT | (Huntlat) | | | |
|----|---------|------------------------|------------------|--|------------------|--|
| | | R-17 \$187 R-17 214 | 245/50 245/45 | | 255/40 285/35 | |

| Blizzak LM-500 | Blizzak LM-50 RFT (Runflat) |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| 155/70 R-19 \$129 | 225/60 R-17 \$139 |

| Blizzak LM-60 | Blizzak WS60 | Blizzak LM-80 |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 245/40 R-17 \$191 | 175/65 R-14 st \$89 | 235/55 R-17 \$179 |
| 265/35 R-18 ^a 159 | 185/65 R-14 84 | 235/50 R-18 228 |
| 225/40 R-19 179 | 145/65 R-15 76 | 255/50 R-19 ^{rt} 263 |
| 265/35 R-19 224 | 205/60 R-15 91 | RFT (Runflat) |
| 275/45 R-19 ^{tt} 225 | 185/55 R-16 ³² 93 | 225/65 RF- 17 \$171 |
| 255/50 R-20 st 281 | 225/55 R-16 124 | |
| RFT (Runflat) | 235/60 R-16 120 | |
| 195/55 R-16 \$157 | Louise II IV ILV | |
| 205/45 R-17 180 | | |
| 225/40 R-18 240 | Blizzak LM-32s | Blizzak DM-Z3 |
| 235/55 R-18 257 | | |
| 255/55 R-18 st 287 | 235/45 R-17 \$183 | 265/45 R-21 \$299 |

BRIDGESTONE

| Blizzak DM-V1 | | |
|---|--|--|
| 21577 R-15 \$106 215778 R-16 121 225778 R-16 121 225778 R-16 122 225778 R-16 122 225778 R-16 125 23560 R-16 125 23560 R-16 125 23560 R-16 126 2356778 R-16 126 225779 R-16 126 225779 R-16 126 225779 R-16 126 225779 R-16 126 225779 R-17 125 22565 R-17 125 22565 R-17 125 22566 R-17 125 225678 R-17 144 | 25560 R-17 \$199 P25567 R-17 132 P25570 R-17 137 P25570 R-17 137 P25575 R-17 147 P25575 R-17 147 P25555 R-18 157 P25556 R-18 157 P25556 R-18 157 P25556 R-18 157 P25556 R-18 157 P25570 R-18 152 P25570 R-18 152 P25570 R-18 152 P25570 R-18 152 P25570 R-18 157 P25570 R-18 158 | 25/60 R-18 \$19 15/ 125/55 R-19 15/ 125/55 R-19 16/ 125/55 R-19 16/ 125/55 R-19 16/ 125/55 R-19 16/ 125/55 R-19 10/ 125/55 R-19 207 125/55 R-19 207 125/55 R-19 207 125/55 R-20 10/ 125/55 R-20 |
| Blizzak W965 LT215/85 R-16 ⁸ \$155 LT225/75 R-16 ⁸ 155 LT235/85 R-16 ⁸ 175 | LT245/75 R-16 \$167 LT265/75 R-16 172 LT235/80 R-17 182 | LT245/70 R-17 [§] \$182 |
| GENERAL | TIRE 🕤 | |
| AltiMAX Arctic (stude 175/70 R-13 \$49 175/85 R-14 56 | dable \$15/tire) 205/55 R-16 \$85 205/60 R-16 76 | 205/50 R-17/\$100 215/45 R-17 112 |

| 175/70 175/65 185/60 185/65 185/70 185/60 185/65 196/55 196/60 | Arcti R-13 R-14 R-14 R-14 R-15 R-15 R-15 R-15 R-15 | \$49 56 60 65 57 61 62 80 64 64 | dable \$15/1 206/56 205/60 215/56 215/60 215/66 215/70 225/56 225/60 225/70 235/60 | | \$85 76 95 79 87 79 102 85 86 101 | 206/50 215/45 215/50 215/55 215/65 215/65 225/45 225/60 225/60 | R-17*\$100 R-17 112 R-17 110 R-17 105 R-17 106 R-17 102 R-17 108 R-17 103 R-17 103 R-17 108 |
|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 205/70 215/60 215/65 | R-15 R-15 R-15 R-15 R-15 R-15 | 69 70 61 74 72 64 75 | 235/70 235/75 245/70 245/75 255/70 265/75 | R-16 R-16 R-16 R-16 R-16 R-16 | 89 93 95 95 95 98 99 | 235/45 235/55 235/65 245/65 245/70 265/70 | R-17 115 R-17* 110 R-17 118 R-17 110 R-17 110 |
| MAY | Arcti | c IT fe | to oldshbud | 5/tire | 1 | | |



Winter Slalom KSI 225/70 R-16 \$68

Continental 3

| 185/55 185/65 195/65 195/65 205/65 205/65 205/65 205/65 215/65 | WinterContact R-15, \$70 R-15, \$70 R-15, \$72 R-15, 73 R-15, 74 R-15, 75 R-16, 97 R-16, 97 R-16, 97 R-16, 98 R-16, 98 R-16, 98 | 215/70 225/55 225/60 225/60 205/65 215/65 215/66 215/66 | R-16 \$94 R-16 104 R-16 96 R-16 103 R-17 115 R-17 116 R-17 106 |
|--|---|--|--|
| 215/65 | R-16 st 93 | 215/65 | R-17 104 |

| ContiWi | nterC | ontact | TS800 | | |
|---------|-------|--------|--------|------|------|
| 155/60 | R-15 | \$88 | 175/55 | R-15 | \$10 |

| ContiWint | terContact 1 | S830 P | |
|--|--|----------------------------|--|
| 235/60 R 255/55 R 235/40 R 265/40 R | -18 \$215 -18 219 -19 281 -19 306 | 295/35 255/40 285/35 | R-19 \$325 R-20 st 316 R-20 st 375 |

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| Eagle Ultra | Ultra Grip |
|---|-------------------|
| Grip GW-3 | Performance 2 |
| 265/60 R-17 \$149 | 225/40 R-18*\$188 |
| P225/60 R-18 146 | ROF (Run0nFlat) |
| 245/55 R-18 170 | 205/55 R-16 \$150 |
| ROF (RunOnFlat) 195/55 R-16 \$134 205/50 R-17 155 Ultra Grip Ice WRT | 255/50 R-21 288 |
| 196/65 R-15 \$80 | 215/55 R-17 \$118 |
| 205/55 R-16* 101 | 215/65 R-17 108 |
| 205/60 R-16* 113 | 225/45 R-17 15 |
| 215/55 R-16* 113 | 225/50 R-17 15 |
| 215/65 R-16* 96 | 225/50 R-17 12 |
| 215/65 R-16 95 | 225/65 R-17 10 |
| 225/60 R-16 100 | 235/65 R-17 10 |
| 235/60 R-16 105 | 235/65 R-17 12 |

215/45 R-17 143 215/50 R-17¹⁴ 135 225/45 R-18 147 225/55 R-18 152 Ultra Grip Ice WRT SUV (studdable \$15/tire) 265/70 R-17 \$130 P255/70 R-18 133 P265/60 R-18 152

| Ultra Grip Ice WRT LT | (studdable \$15/tire |
|--|----------------------|
| LT265/75 R-16 \$155 LT245/75 R-17 160 | LT265/70 R-17 \$179 |

| Ultra Gr | ip Wir | iter (st | iddable \$1 | 5/tire) | |
|----------------------------|--------------|----------------|------------------|--------------|------|
| 175/65 175/70 | R-14 | \$60 55 | 205/65 205/70 | R-15 R-15 | \$7 |
| 185/60 185/65 185/70 | R-14 | 62 61 55 | 235/75 205/55 | R-156 | 6000 |
| 195/70 185/60 | R-14 R-15 | 57 66 | 205/60 215/60 | R-16 | 7 |
| 195/55 195/60 | R-15 | 75 67 | 225/60 225/65 | R-16 R-16 | 0000 |
| 195/65 205/60 | R-15 | 67 | 235/60 235/65 | R-16 R-16 | 99 |

| 15/65 | B-17 \$100 | |
|------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| 25/45 | R-17 \$100 R-17 123 R-17 120 | |
| 25/60 | R-17 110 | |
| 25/65 | R-17 112 R-17 129 | |
| 235/65 245/65 | R-17 118 R-17 133 R-17 134 | |
| 65/70 | R-17 134 | |

ContiCross Contact Winter 295/35 R-21*\$360 275/40 R-22** 383

ContiWinterContact TS830 P ContiSeal 205/55 R-16 \$128

Ultra Grip SUV RunOnFlat 255/55 R-18*\$238

| 235/45 | R-18 \$165 |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 235/50 | R-18 166 |
| 235/55 | R-18 145 |
| 235/65 | R-18 139 |
| 245/60 | R-18 141 |
| 235/55 | R-19 142 |
| 245/55 | H-19 156 |
| 235/55 245/55 245/50 | R-19 142 R-19 156 R-20 167 |

P275/65 R-18 \$161 P275/55 R-20 175

Ultra Grip Ice P255/65 R-18 \$146

| \$103 |
|-------|
| \$103 |
| 115 |
| 107 |
| 106 |
| 114 |
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| 133 |
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LT265/70 R-17*\$156 LT285/70 R-17* 174

'15 Chevrolet Camaro LT 1LT 225/65R-17 Goodyear Ultra Grip Ice WRT 17x7.5 Sport Edition F11

Total Package Price: \$912 Optional Set of TPMS Sensors: \$196



'15 Cadillac Escalade 265/70R-17 Bridgestone Blizzak DM-V1 17x8 Sport Edition TK6 Total Package Price: \$1,184 Optional Set of TPMS Sensors: \$196

TIRE RACK

IRELLI Winter Sottozero 3

16*\$132 16 129 16 124 7** 152 7** 155 7** 167 7** 163 7 177 182 168 215/55 R-16 215/55 R-16 215/55 R-16 215/65 R-16 205/45 R-17 205/50 R-17 215/50 WR-17 225/45 R-17 225/55 R-17 225/55 R-17

Winter Sottozero Serie

Winter Sottozero
195/55 R-16 \$109
195/60 R-16 105
205/45 R-16** 132
205/40 R-17** 150
215/60 R-17 129
235/50 R-18** 219
245/40 R-18** 230

Winter Snov 225/40 R-18^x**\$188** 265/35 R-18^x **258**

Scorpion Ice & Snov 235/60 R-17 \$158 275/55 R-17 204 275/55 R-17 204 235/60 R-184 178 235/65 R-184 175 245/60 R-18 175 245/55 R-184 187 255/55 R-184 200

WINTER
R-16°\$115
R-16°\$119
R-16°\$119
R-16°\$119
R-17°\$1349
R-17°\$149
R-17°\$149
R-17°\$148
R-17°\$148
R-18°\$158
R-18°\$158
R-18°\$158
R-18°\$179

Winter Snowcontrol Serie 3
195/45 R-16:\$101 RFT (Runflat)
195/50 R-16:** 117 195/55 R-16 \$127

Winter Icecontrol 175/65 R-14 \$39

17²¹ 145 17 149 17²¹ 142 17²¹ 159 18²¹ 169 18²¹ 169 18²¹ 169 18²¹ 180 19²¹ 199 19²¹ 223 19²¹ 214

VR-17-3105 R-17-2 195 R-17-2 195 R-18-2 164 R-18-2 233 R-18-2 233 R-18-2 229 R-18-2 324 R-19-2 259 R-19-2 259

235/35 245/45

245/45 255/340 255/340 255/45 255/45 255/45 255/45 255/35 285/30 285/30 295/35 245/35



flat) R-17 **\$193** R-17^{XL} **206**

295/30 R-20 \$373 295/30 R-20 *424 RT (Hunfled) 205/35 R-16 *138 205/35 R-16 *138 205/35 R-17 *138 205/35 R-17 *139 225/36 R-17 *139 225/36 R-17 *139 225/36 R-18 *137 225/36 R-18 *137

R-19 **\$326** R-20^{XL} **385** R-20^{XL} **427** R-20 **498** RFT (Runflat) 275/35 R-19*\$346

Winter Snowcontrol 175/65 R-15 \$81

Winter Carving 185/70 R-14 \$81 195/60 R-15 80 225/55 R-17^{XL} 137

R-17*\$179 R-18** 225 R-19** 248 R-19** 263 R-20** 263 R-20** 306 R-20** 342

R-20^x\$316 R-20^x 325 nflat) R-20^x\$336 R-20^x 417 R-21^x 399 R-21^x 421



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| X-Ice XI3 175/65 R-14* \$90 175/65 R-14* \$90 175/65 R-14* \$10 185/67 R-14* \$10 185/67 R-14* \$10 185/67 R-14* \$10 185/67 R-15* | 205/55 R-16'\$122 205/56 R-16'\$120 205/56 R-16'\$1.06 215/56 R-16'\$1.09 215/56 R-16'\$1.00 215/56 R-16'\$1.00 215/56 R-16'\$1.00 215/56 R-16'\$1.00 215/56 R-16'\$1.00 215/56 R-16'\$1 | 235/45 R-17' \$188 235/45 R-17' \$188 235/55 R-18' 19 17 R-18' 19 18' 18' 18' 18' 18' 18' 18' 18' 18' 18' |
| Pilot Alpin PA3 | Pilot Alpin PA4 | Pilot Alpin PA4 N-Spec for Porsch |
| 245/45 R-17*\$235 235/40 R-18** 219 235/45 R-18** 219 Pilot Alpin PA2 235/40 R-18 \$225 255/40 R-18 \$265 265/40 R-18 \$265 265/40 R-18 \$465 265/40 R-18 \$465 265/40 R-18 \$465 265/40 R-18 \$465 | 225/40 R-18*5220 245/49 R-18*221 245/49 R-18*227 245/50 R-18*227 255/35 R-18*285 245/40 R-18*321 245/40 R-19*325 245/40 R-19*311 285/36 R-19*375 285/36 R-19*375 285/36 R-19*375 | 235/40 R-19 \$277 255/45 R-19 279 265/40 R-19 335 285/40 R-19 360 245/35 R-20 ¹⁰ 410 255/40 R-20 ¹⁰ 475 295/30 R-20 ¹⁰ 404 |
| Pilot Alpin | Primacy Alpin | Primacy Alpin PA3 |
| PA2 ZP (Runflat) 225/50 R-17 \$186 245/50 R-18 238 | Primacy Alpin PA3 ZP (Runflat) 195/55 R-16 \$153 225/45 R-17 194 | 205/55 R-16 \$133 205/45 R-17 ¹² 176 205/55 R-17 ¹² 167 225/45 R-17 168 |
| Latitude X-Ice Xi2 P235/75 R-15*\$117 | 245/70 R-17 \$135 | 265/60 R-18 \$184 |
| P235/75 R-15*117 265/70 R-16*123 225/70 R-16*123 225/70 R-16*123 235/76 R-16*135 245/70 R-16*134 265/70 R-16*134 265/70 R-16*134 225/66 R-17*127 235/66 R-17*127 235/66 R-17*127 245/65 R-17*139 | 245/70 R-17 \$135 255/60 R-17 169 255/70 R-17 169 265/70 R-17 167 265/70 R-17 167 235/55 R-18 152 235/60 R-18 165 245/60 R-18 165 245/60 R-18 165 255/55 R-18 187 255/56 R-18 175 | 265/60 R-18 \$184 265/65 R-18 181 235/55 R-19 188 255/50 R-19* 259 255/50 R-19* 240 255/50 R-19* 240 245/50 R-19* 200 245/50 R-19* 200 245/50 R-20* 238 275/40 R-20* 238 275/45 R-20* 235 275/55 R-20* 204 |
| 245/65 R-17 139 | 255/65 R-18 175 | Latitude Alpin |
| Latitude X-Ice Xi2 ZP 255/55 R-18/\$256 | Latitude Alpin HP 235/50 R-18 \$221 265/55 R-19 307 | HP ZP 255/55 R-18*\$260 |
| Latitude Alpin 225/55 R-18 \$184 255/55 R-18 ³² 183 | Latitude Alpin LA2 265/45 R-20 \$296 295/40 R-20 365 | LTX Winter LT225/75 R-16 [£] \$161 LT245/75 R-16 [£] 167 LT265/75 R-16 [£] 166 LT265/70 R-17 [£] 192 LT275/65 R-18 [£] 238 |
| Firest | one | E1270/00 11 10 200 |
| Winterforce (studdable 175/70 R-12 \$48 175/65 R-14 61 185/66 R-14 62 185/70 R-14 52 1918/70 R-14 55 1918/70 R-14 85 1918/70 R-14 85 1918/70 R-14 85 1918/70 R-14 85 1918/70 R-15 66 185/60 R-15 66 | 2 \$15/tire) 185/65 R-15 \$68 195/66 R-15 570 205/66 R-15 770 205/66 R-15 572 205/76 R-15 575 215/66 R-15 74 215/66 R-15 74 215/66 R-15 74 215/66 R-15 89 205/50 R-16 95 | 205/60 R-16 \$74 215/50 R-16 97 215/60 R-16 97 225/50 R-16 97 225/50 R-16 97 225/50 R-17 95 225/50 R-17 122 225/50 R-17 95 225/60 R-17 95 225/60 R-18 104 |
| | | 225/60 R-18 104 |
| Winterforce UV (studda P215/75 R-15 \$72 225/70 R-15 76 P225/75 R-15 75 P225/75 R-15 83 P235/75 R-15 85 P235/75 R-15 89 215/65 R-16 93 | P215/70 R-16 \$81 P225/70 R-16 87 P225/75 R-16 87 P235/65 R-16 102 P235/70 R-16 98 P245/75 R-16 98 P255/70 R-16 98 | P265/70 R-16 \$103 P265/75 R-16 96 P235/65 R-17 117 245/65 R-17 122 P245/70 R-17 101 P265/70 R-17 111 |
| Winterforce LT (studda | ble \$15/tire) | |
| Winterforce LT (studda LT215/85 R-16 [‡] \$125 LT225/75 R-16 [‡] 125 LT235/85 R-16 [‡] 136 LT245/75 R-16 [‡] 134 LT265/75 R-16 [‡] 138 | LT285/75 R-16*\$150 LT225/75 R-17 ^E 135 LT235/80 R-17 ^E 145 LT245/70 R-17 ^E 146 LT245/75 R-17 ^E 146 | LT255/75 R-17°\$152 LT265/70 R-17° 155 LT275/65 R-18° 185 LT275/70 R-18° 174 LT275/65 R-20° 202 |

Package Includes

Geolandar I/T G072 255/70 R-18 \$122 P265/65 R-18 151 275/65 R-18 149

- 4 tires and 4 wheels, mounted and balanced
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- All necessary hardware at no extra cost!

P245/60 R-20 \$162 275/55 R-20^{RF} 168

What About TPMS?

245/55 R-19 \$154 P255/60 R-19 164 P235/55 R-20 167

An extra set of TPMS sensors is also available for most systems, and can arrive pre-installed on your package!



'14 Toyota Camry V6 SE 205/65R-16 Bridgestone Blizzak WS80 16x6.5 New Steel Wheels w/Covers Total Package Price: \$718 Optional Set of TPMS Sensors: \$216



'15 BMW 640i Gran Coupe 225/55R-17 Bridgestone Blizzak LM-32RFT 17x8 RIAL Salerno Total Package Price: \$1,268 Optional Set of TPMS Sensors: \$228



'14 Ford F-150 2WD SuperCrew 245/70R-17 General AltiMAX Arctic 17x8 Ultra Mako

Total Package Price: \$1,056 Optional Set of TPMS Sensors: \$128







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THE BOOT







LOST ART

by ROB SIEGEL

Sparking the Fire: Prehistoric Ignition 101

n the movie *Airplane II*, Lloyd Bridges tells Stephen Stucker, "I want to know absolutely everything that's happened up till now." "Well, let's see. First, the earth cooled. And then the dinosaurs came, but they got too big and fat, so they all died and they turned into oil." It's not quite as easy to condense the history of the gasoline-engine

ignition system, but I'll give it a try: Some of the earliest gas engines used what was basically a Bunsen burner and a mechanically sliding window to light the air-fuel mixture. Using a magneto to generate a spark came next—and that method is still used on everything from chain saws to aircraft engines. But as automotive electrical systems became more reliable, battery-powered ignition systems took over and remained the dominant configuration for three-quarters of a century. That setup is charming, but it breaks. Now, everything's computerized. There. Easy, right?

Every gas engine needs spark to set off combustion, and every spark needs to happen in the right cylinder at the right time. Back in the day, these functions were performed by mechanical contrivances on the engine in which things physically opened, closed, and spun around. You know of this arrangement as the distributor-breaker-point ignition system—and you owe it all to smart guy and eventual GM research head Charles F. Kettering. His eponymous system, first installed on the 1910 Cadillac, had all the elements that remained in automotive ignition through the Seventies.

An ignition coil relies on Faraday's Law to convert a battery's 12 volts into the higher voltage needed to produce ignition spark. The distributor times those sparks and sends them to the appropriate cylinder. The distributor is typically a round thing with spark-plug wires attached to the top. Inside, an engine-driven rotor spins, making round-robin contact with electrical tabs on the cap, "distributing" (how about that?) the electrical discharge to those wires, and thus, each spark plug.

A contact breaker (or pair of breakers) within the distributor, called points, ride on a lobed shaft. As the engine spins the distributor, the points open and close. When they're closed, current from the battery flows to the coil. But when the distributor lobe kicks the points open, that stops the current and causes the coil to discharge, creating a sudden jolt of high-voltage electricity.

A capacitor, called a condenser, prevents the current from arcing across the point gap, instead forcing it to discharge from the coil. A thick wire connects the coil to the center of the distributor cap—and from there, the jolt is sent to the proper cylinder's plug, where—*bam!*—it becomes a spark.

With the rotor spinning and the points opening and closing thousands of times a minute, things wear out. The electrical make-and-break causes pits on one side of the point-gap surface and mounds on the other. This wear slightly alters when the plugs fire—and remember, ignition timing needs to be precise. To keep it that way, the points need to be adjusted regularly. Change how close the breakers are to each other and when during the cycle they open—something you can do on almost every set of points—and you change when the spark plug fires. That's done by measuring something called dwell angle, the number of degrees for each rotation of the distributor that the points are closed.

Dwell is adjusted by physically setting the maximum point gap, but that gap is only an approximation of the dwell angle—the angle must be verified by connecting something called a dwell meter to the engine. If the reading on the meter is too high, the points are closed for too many degrees of rotation, and the point gap needs to be increased. (The opposite is true if it's too low.) This is far easier than it sounds; the dwell meter essentially does all

the work, and you simply adjust the points until the meter reading matches what's specified in your car's shop manual. While some cars have a little window in the distributor allowing you to adjust the gap while the engine is running, most don't, making the process one of trial and error.

Neglect dwell adjustments long enough, and eventually the points may not open at all, causing a no-spark condition. Which causes a no-drive condition. In the old days, the low-cost solution was to file the points down to restore their efficiency—and you still can—but replacement is best.

To improve reliability and efficiency, modern cars have dramatically different ignition systems. "Breakerless" electronic ignitions replaced mechanical points in the Sixties and Seventies. The Seventies saw the first digital engine-management systems to map ignition advance and fire the coil at the correct time. The coil still fed a "distributor" of sorts, with a spinning rotor, cap, and individual plug wires, but it did not alter ignition timing. The mid-Nineties heralded the introduction of "stick coils," thin ignition coils integrated with the spark-plug connector, allowing one coil per spark plug, and thus the deletion of any moving parts or long, high-voltage wires associated with the ignition.

Like many things on vintage cars, old ignition has its charms. In modern cars, a complex and exacting procedure has been swapped for a handful of sensors and algorithms and processors. While I often replace the points and condenser on my old cars with a compact electronic ignition unit for reliability, I miss the process of setting the timing. Many modern repair shops don't even know what the tools are, let alone how to use them.

Surely you think that's silly. (And to cap things off with another *Airplane!* reference, you say, "Of course I do, and don't call me Shirley.")

Rob Siegel (robsiegel.com) is a renaissance wrench from Boston.







hen BMW introduced its new-for-2014 diesel 3-series wagon, we begged to get our hands on a long-term tester for obvious reasons. The 328d xDrive Sports Wagon is a rare and appealing combination for the enthusiast with cargohauling needs: wagon body style, efficient diesel engine, and all-wheel drive. Sadly, a manual gearbox isn't offered, leaving the 328d one superlative jewel short of the holy grail. At least with a

Our car, however, arrived with a whopping \$58,000 window sticker due to a mile-long list of options, including some \$10,000 in luxury and appearance add-ons. Considering BMW calls this a Sports Wagon, it'd be easy to argue that our tester's performance-enhancing extrasnamely \$650 M Sport brakes and a \$1000 handling package, which adds adaptive dampers and quicker-ratio steering—should come standard.

base price of \$43,875, the 328d can offer somewhat of a value.

Rather than dwell on the spec sheet, we got behind the wheel and hit

the road. The 328d quickly became everyone's go-to car for long hauls,

WHY WE GOT IT

Rare combination of wagon, diesel, AWD, and BMW.



Efficient, refined, and great for a road trip to IKEA.

All it needs is a clutch pedal and a discount.

thanks to its 525-mile highway range and composed ride. During a 1500-mile, 24-hour trek from Ann Arbor to Atlanta, staff road-trippers applauded the supportive seats, cup holders that swallowed venti-size Starbucks, and the glorious 16-speaker Harman/Kardon stereo that crisply blasted their playlists. In a car that can travel more than seven hours between highway fill-ups, those comforts are particularly welcome.

This car is more than a freeway cruiser, though. On back roads, Sport mode stiffened the suspension, added steering effort, and sped up the powertrain response. That didn't improve steering feel or the lines of communication between chassis and driver, but the BMW still proved plenty capable of spirited driving on 18-inch Bridgestone Potenza S001 summer tires. With a rear-biased torque split, the xDrive all-wheel-drive system allowed the 3790-pound wagon to slide gracefully through corners without stability control stepping in to ruin the fun.

Unfortunately, things weren't nearly as smooth under the hood. The 328d is the first 3-series sold in the United States with BMW's N47 2.0-liter, a turbocharged four-cylinder diesel that delivers 181 hp and 280 lb-ft of torque.

We're accustomed to modern diesel engines—especially those from Germany—that are remarkably quiet, but this particular one exhibits noticeable clatter, especially during start/stop.

That auditory harshness was taxing, but the 2.0-liter paid dividends by averaging a spectacular 38 mpg during our test, and we wasted not a single mile driving to the dealership, thanks to BMW's famously long oil-change intervals. Instead, we just kept road-tripping.

Still, some complaints arose during our 10,000 test miles. After a jaunt to Chicago, Editor-in-Chief Larry Webster decreed that "somebody should kill this stupid shifter," the same phallic gear selector that's been driving us crazy for years, because it requires you to push forward to go backward and vice versa. A few drivers complained of poor rear visibility, and the less patient among us noticed turbo lag.

Overall, though, the 328d xDrive Sports Wagon won us over by blending sportiness and efficiency into a cohesive, utilitarian package. The highest praise came from Art Director Matt Tierney, a man constantly hustling two children and a whole mess of camera equipment, who asked: "Whom should I call at BMW to buy it?"

Apparently, he has places to go.

-ROBIN WARNER



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RESULTS ARE MARKED IN BLUE

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Road Test Summary [Dec 2014/Jan 2015]

1

| MAKE & MODEL | PRICE AS T. | ENGINE TVA. | HORSEBOUR | TORDITE 1.5 | CURR METER | D-En INC. | W. Marie | TOP SPEED | RPANCE. | ROADUM SO-0 MPH, F |
|--|----------------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|------------|-----------|--------------|------------------|---------|--------------------|
| | _ = | <u> </u> | / ≢ | = | 5 | | | <i> </i> = | | |
| Acura ILX 2.4 (2/14) | \$30,185 | 1-4 | 201 | 170 | 2967 | 6.7 | 15.2 @ 92.3 | 1382 | 129 | 0.86 |
| Alfa Romeo 4C ³ (8/14) | \$54,000 | l-4t | 237 | 258 | 22001 | 4.2 | 12.9 @ 107.8 | 160 | 175 | 0.95 |
| Aston Martin Rapide ³ (9/10) | \$212,445 | V-12 | 470 | 443 | 4385 | 4.7 | 13.1 @ 109.5 | 1881 | 119 | 0.92 |
| V8 Vantage (10/12) | \$130,285 | V-8 | 420 | 346 | 3685 | 4.6 | 12.9 @ 111.3 | 180 | 126 | 0.92 |
| V12 Vantage S3 (7/14) | \$218,330 | V-12 | 565 | 457 | 3681 | 3.9 | 12.1 @ 120.5 | 205 | 123 | 0.93 |
| Vanquish ³ (7/13) | \$303,635 | V-12 | 565 | 457 | 3935 | 4.4 | 12.6 @ 117.7 | 183 | 112 | 0.95 |
| Audi A3 2.0T ³ (6/14) | \$36,645 | 1-4t | 220 | 258 | 3338 | 5.5 | 14.2@97.8 | 130 ² | 123 | 0.90 |
| R8 V10 Plus ³ (8/13) | \$191,445 | V-10 | 550 | 398 | 3665 | 3.2 | 11.4 @ 123.4 | 197 | 118 | 0.96 |
| RS73 (3/14) | \$122,545 | V-8tt | 560 | 516 | 4420 | 3.2 | 11.6 @ 120.3 | 1742 | 111 | 0.93 |
| RS53 (P13) | \$77,320 | V-8 | 450 | 317 | 4060 | 3.8 | 12.2 @ 113.6 | 174 | 114 | 0.96 |
| S7 ² (1/13) | \$86,170 | V-8tt | 420 | 406 | 4463 | 4.0 | 12.4 @ 111.0 | 1542 | 116 | 0.92 |
| TT RS (1/12) | \$61,125 | I-5t | 360 | 343 | 3360 | 4.0 | 12.6 @ 109.6 | 1742 | 123 | 0.95 |
| Bentley Continental GT ³ (7/11) | \$215,675 | W-12tt | 567 | 516 | 5305 | 4.3 | 12.8 @ 111.3 | 198 | 117 | 0.89 |
| Continental Supersports Conv.3 (11/11) | | | 621 | 590 | 5515 | 3.9 | 12.5 @ 110.1 | 202 | 117 | 0.89 |
| BMW M235i ⁸ (5/14) | \$44,025 | I-6t | 320 | 330 | 3491 | 4.5 | 13.1 @ 107.8 | 155 ² | 113 | - |
| 32013 (6/14) | \$34,975 | 1-4t | 180 | 200 | 3335 | 6.8 | 15.3 @ 88.9 | 130 ² | 117 | 0.95 |
| 33513 (10/13) | \$49,225 | I-6t | 300 | 300 | 3592 | 4.9 | 13.5 @ 103.8 | 155 ² | 124 | 0.87 |
| i8 ³ (7/14) | \$136,625 | I-3th | 357 | _ | 3380 | 3.8 | 12.3 @ 114.4 | 1552 | 119 | 0.91 |
| M3 (12/14) | \$81,425 | I-6tt | 425 | 406 | 3540 | 3.9 | 12.3 @ 114.9 | 1552 | 106 | 0.98 |
| M5 Competition Package ³ (3/14) | \$117,075 | V-8tt | 575 | 502 | 4300 | 3.8 | 12.0 @ 122.3 | 1552 | 122 | 0.92 |
| M6 Gran Coupe (10/13) | \$141,775 | V-8tt | 552 | 502 | 4371 | 3.9 | 12.1 @ 120.0 | 1552 | 118 | 0.95 |
| Bugatti Veyron 16.4 Super Sport ^a min | | W-16at | - | | | 2.5 | 9.9 @ 145.8 | | 124 | 0.99 |
| Buick Regal GS (12/11) | \$38,350 | 1-4t | 270 | 295 | 3785 | 6.2 | 14.7 @ 99.0 | 152 | 119 | 0.90 |
| Verano Turbo (12/12) | \$29,990 | 1-4t | 250 | 260 | 3482 | 6.1 | 14.7 @ 99.0 | 1282 | 122 | 0.84 |
| Cadillac ATS 2.0T (17/12) | \$45,910 | 1-4t | 272 | 260 | 3464 | 6.0 | 14.4 @ 96.9 | 1492 | 114 | 0.89 |
| ATS 3.63 (10/13) | \$52,405 | V-6 | 321 | 275 | 3536 | 5.4 | 14.0 @ 101.6 | 1492 | 119 | 0.89 |
| CTS-V Sedan (8/12) | \$71,505 | V-8s | 556 | 551 | 4310 | 4.2 | 12.5 @ 115.3 | 191 | 116 | 0.92 |
| CTS Vsport ² (11/13) | \$60,095 | V-6tt | 420 | 430 | 3966 | 4.4 | 12.7 @ 112.8 | 172 | 119 | 0.94 |
| Chevrolet Camaro Z/28 (5/14) | \$75,000 | V-8 | 505 | 481 | 3856 | 4.0 | 12.2 @ 118.3 | 172 | 115 | 1.09 |
| Camaro ZL1 (8/12) | \$57,590 | V-Bs | 580 | 556 | 4080 | 3.9 | 12.1 @ 119.9 | 180 | 114 | 0.98 |
| Corvette Stingray (9/13) | \$67,915 | V-8 | 460 | 465 | 3444 | 3.8 | 12.2 @ 116.5 | 185 | 105 | 1.07 |
| Corvette Z06 (4/12) | \$101,760 | V-8 | 505 | 470 | 3310 | 3.6 | 11.7 @ 124.1 | 198 | 103 | 1.07 |
| Corvette ZR1 (10/12) | \$125,295 | V-8s | 638 | 604 | 3395 | 3.4 | 11.4 @ 129.7 | 205 | 105 | 1.08 |
| | | V-0S | 415 | 415 | 3931 | 4.5 | 12.9 @ 110.2 | 165 | 117 | 0.93 |
| \$\$5 (2/14) Chrysler 300 \$RTB ³ (12/11) | \$45,770 \$57,725 | V-8 | 470 | 470 | 4430 | 4.5 | 12.9 @ 111.6 | 175 | 120 | 0.82 |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| Dodge Challenger SRT8 392 (5/11) | \$44,380 | V-8 | 470 | 470 | 4350 | 4.6 | 13.0 @ 109.8 | 180 | 117 | 0.90 |
| Factory Five 818R (7/13) | \$25,377 | H-4t | 270 | 300 | 2012 | 3.8 | 12.5 @ 111.7 | 145 | 114 | 1.12 |
| Ferrari 458 Italia ³ (10/12) | \$340,113 | V-8 | 570 | 398 | 3400 | 3.0 | 10.9 @ 132.5 | 203 | 106 | 1.01 |
| 458 Speciale ³ (13/14) | \$366,120 | V-8 | 597 | 398 | 3199 | 3.0 | 11.1 @ 125.7 | 202 | 102 | 1.01 |
| Fiat 500 Abarth (10/12) | \$27,050 | I-4t | 160 | 170 | 2660 | 6.7 | 15.1 @ 91.8 | 131 | 127 | 0.85 |
| Ford Fiesta ST (12/13) | \$24,985 | l-4t | 197 | 202 | 2752 | 6.7 | 15.0 @ 93.7 | 1351 | 121 | 0.95 |
| Focus ST (11/12) | \$ 29,425 | I-4t | 252 | 270 | 3242 | 5.9 | 14.6 @ 95.2 | 154 | 118 | 0.96 |
| Mustang Boss 302 LS (5/11) | \$47,990 | V-8 | 444 | 380 | 3690 | 4.1 | 12.3 @ 117.2 | 1552 | 112 | 1.02 |
| Mustang GT (12/14) | \$45,885 | V-8 | 435 | 400 | 3806 | 4.5 | 13.0 @ 112.0 | 1651 | 114 | 0.95 |
| Shelby GT500 (9/12) | \$65,075 | V-8s | 662 | 631 | 38501 | 3.5 | 11.7 @ 128.1 | 2021 | 115 | 0.95 |
| Honda Civic St (2/14) | \$23,705 | 1-4 | 201 | 170 | 2958 | 6.5 | 15.0 @ 93.2 | 1362 | 117 | 0.91 |

| MAKE & MODEL | PRICE AS 2. | ENGINE THE | HORSERGE | TOROUT SAE | CURB WEIGHT | D-En 1-18 | W-MILL SEC | TOP SPECE | RPAKING | ROADHOLDING G |
|---|------------------|------------|----------|------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|------------------|---------|---------------|
| Hyundai Equus Signature ⁹ (10/11) | \$58,900 | V-8 | 385 | 333 | 4610 | 6.2 | 14.6 @ 98.6 | 1492 | 128 | 0.80 |
| Genesis Coupe 2.0T R-Spec (7/12) | \$27,375 | l-4t | 274 | 275 | 3495 | 6.3 | 14.5 @ 99.1 | 146 ² | 124 | 0.92 |
| Infiniti M563 (1/11) | \$68,145 | V-8 | 420 | 417 | 3930 | 4.6 | 13.1@108.7 | 1552 | 121 | 0.87 |
| Q50S3 (10/13) | \$51,805 | V-6 | 328 | 269 | 3675 | 5.3 | 13.8 @ 102.4 | 1552 | 123 | 0.86 |
| Jaguar F-type R Coupe ³ (11/14) | \$105,875 | V-8s | 550 | 502 | 3929 | 3.7 | 11.9 @ 122.7 | 1862 | 110 | 0.99 |
| F-type S3 (8/13) | \$91,965 | V-6s | 380 | 339 | 3839 | 4.2 | 12.7 @ 110.0 | 1719 | 112 | 0.92 |
| F-type V8 S3 (12/13) | \$104,270 | V-8s | 495 | 460 | 3980 | 3.8 | 12.0 @ 120.0 | 1862 | 113 | 0.98 |
| XFR-S3 (3/14) | \$105,770 | V-8s | 550 | 502 | 4300 | 3.7 | 12.1 @ 118.3 | 1862 | 115 | 0.91 |
| XKR-S ² (3/12) | \$132,875 | V-8s | 542 | 502 | 4100 | 4.2 | 12.3 @ 121.0 | 1862 | 117 | 0.91 |
| Lamborghini Aventador ³ (5/12) | \$406,905 | V-12 | 691 | 509 | 3795 | 2.7 | 10.4 @ 136.0 | 217 | 108 | 1.05 |
| Gallardo Superleggera (12/10) | \$282,180 | V-10 | 562 | 398 | 3470 | 3.0 | 11.0 @ 128.9 | 1981 | 109 | 0.99 |
| Land Rover Range Rover ³ (2/14) | \$114,930 | V-8s | 510 | 461 | 5589 | 4.7 | 13.1 @ 107.7 | 1362 | 126 | 0.77 |
| Lexus IS 350 F Sport ³ (10/13) | \$47,955 | V-6 | 306 | 277 | 3704 | 5.4 | 13.9 @ 102.1 | 1432 | 126 | 0.85 |
| RC F3 (12/14) | \$73,225 | V-8 | 467 | 389 | 4039 | 4.3 | 12.7 @ 113.0 | 1702 | 117 | 0.93 |
| Lotus Elise S Club Racer (6/14) | \$59,0001 | 1-4s | 217 | 184 | 20001 | 4.8 | 13.6 @ 102.4 | 145 | 1 | 0.93 |
| Evora S IPS3 (4/13) | \$96,580 | V-6s | 345 | 295 | 3188 | 4.3 | 12.7 @ 110.4 | 1781 | 125 | 0.97 |
| Maserati Gran Turismo Conv. ³ (9/10) | \$144,335 | V-8 | 440 | 361 | 4610 | 4.8 | 13.2 @ 107.8 | 1761 | 114 | 0.87 |
| Mazda 6 Grand Touring ⁹ (8/13) | \$ 31,490 | 1-4 | 184 | 185 | 3310 | 7.5 | 15.9 @ 89.3 | 1281 | 129 | 0.83 |
| MX-5 Miata Grand Touring (7/12) | \$29,655 | I-4 | 167 | 140 | 2555 | 6.6 | 15.0 @ 92.6 | 1282 | 122 | 0.90 |
| McLaren MP4-12C3 (10/12) | \$267,545 | V-8tt | 592 | 443 | 3270 | 3.0 | 10.9 @ 131.7 | 204 | 114 | 1.03 |
| Mercedes-Benz CLA250 ³ (6/14) | \$36,545 | I-4t | 208 | 258 | 3297 | 6.1 | 14.6 @ 97.0 | 149 | 118 | 0.93 |
| CLA45 AMG3 (2/14) | \$60,095 | l-4t | 355 | 332 | 3635 | 4.1 | 12.6 @ 109.8 | 1552 | 112 | 1.03 |
| E63 AMG S-Model 4Matic ³ (3/14) | \$106,825 | V-8tt | 577 | 590 | 4640 | 3.2 | 11.5 @ 123.1 | 1862 | 122 | 0.89 |
| G63 AMG3 (2/14) | \$144,305 | V-8tt | 536 | 560 | 5939 | 5.1 | 13.5 @ 105.0 | 130° | 123 | 0.70 |
| SLS AMG Black Series ³ (12/13) | \$296,075 | V-8 | 622 | 468 | 3716 | 3.2 | 11.1 @ 129.3 | 196¹ | 107 | 1.01 |
| Mini Cooper S (19/14) | \$27,595 | I-4t | 189 | 207 | 2763 | 6.4 | 14.9 @ 94.7 | 146 | 126 | 0.84 |
| Nissan GT-R ³ (7/14) | \$106,650 | V-6tt | 545 | 463 | 3889 | 2.9 | 11.1 @ 124.1 | 191 | 113 | 0.92 |
| GT-R Nismo ³ (12/14) | \$151,880 | V-6tt | 600 | 481 | 3880 | 2.8 | 11.0 @ 126.6 | 1951 | 110 | 1.04 |
| Porsche 911 GT3 ³ (12/14) | \$145,785 | H-6 | 475 | 325 | 3269 | 3.1 | 11.3 @ 123.4 | 195 | 102 | 1.08 |
| 911 Turbo S³ (3/14) | \$193,755 | H-6tt | 560 | 516 | 3607 | 2.6 | 10.9 @ 124.4 | 198 | 115 | 0.98 |
| 918 Spyder ³ (8/14) | \$847,975 | V-8h | 887 | - | 3820 | 2.5 | 10.0 @ 143.7 | 214 | 108 | 1.07 |
| Boxster S3 (8/13) | \$101,070 | H-6 | 315 | 266 | 3155 | 4.1 | 12.6 @ 109.7 | 172 | 110 | 0.97 |
| Cayman S ³ (8/14) | \$67,995 | H-6 | 325 | 272 | 3083 | 4.0 | 12.5@110.5 | 174 | 220 | 0.95 |
| Rolls-Royce Wraith ² (19/14) | \$368,624 | V-12tt | 624 | 590 | 5640 | 4.2 | 12.6 @ 114.2 | 1552 | 121 | 0.87 |
| SRT Viper TA (7/14) | \$120,480 | V-10 | 640 | 600 | 3364 | 3.4 | 11.6 @ 126.7 | 206 | 112 | 1.01 |
| Subaru Crawford BRZ (7/14) | \$63,830 | H-4t | 4001 | 4301 | 2786 | 4.4 | 12.9 @ 112.7 | 1551 | 119 | 0.98 |
| Impreza WRX STI (5/14) | \$38,190 | H-4t | 305 | 290 | 3375 | 4.8 | 13.3 @ 102.8 | 157 | 115 | 0.99 |
| Tesla Model S ³ (4/13) | \$100,100 | EV | 416 | 443 | 4751 | 4.1 | 12.8 @ 106.7 | 1329 | 127 | 0.86 |
| Volkswagen GTI non4 | \$28,305 | F4t | 220 | 258 | 3102 | 5.8 | 14.4 @ 98.7 | 1242 | 116 | 0.87 |
| R&T CLASSICS | | | | | | | | | | |
| BMW Z8 (5/00) | \$135,304 | V-8 | 400 | 369 | 3600 | 4.5 | 13.0 @ 106.5 | 155 ² | 122 | 0.92 |
| F F | 0000 000 | 11.10 | 000 | 405 | 0000 | 0.0 | 111 0 100 0 | 0101 | 100 | 4.04 |

LEGEND For ENGINE TYPES, I is an inline design; H is a horizontal, or flat, design. V, VR, and W describe cylinder configurations; the number following the letter is the number of cylinders. An additional letter, a "t" or an "s," designates turbo- or supercharging; "tt" is twin turbo; "dt" is quad turbo; "d" designates diesel; "h" designates hybrid. "FC" designates fuel cell; "EV" designates an electric vehicle. RED BOX = leader in that category, excluding nonproduction cars. YELLOW = new entry. \(^1\)estimated; \(^2\)electronically limited; automatic/automated transmission. ACCELERATION is measured with one foot of rollout and (as of 2013) corrected to standard atmospheric conditions. TOP SPEED is typically as reported by the manufacturer, but we occasionally measure or estimate it. **BRAKING** distances are measured from the beginning of pedal depression to a complete stop. ROADHOLDING is the average cornering grip measured around a full skidpad lap in each direction. DATA APPLIES TO THE MODEL AT THE TIME (ISSUE DATE) OF TESTING.

Ferrari Enzo (7/03)

Lamborghini Diablo 6.0 (07/00)

Porsche Carerra GT (6/04)

Tesla Roadster Sport³ (5/10)

\$652,830 V-12

\$292,415 V-12

\$460,400 V-10

\$159,145 EV

650 485

550 457

605 435

3530

3.6

288 295 2790 3.7 12.6 @ 104.9 1252 123 0.96

11.1 @ 133.0 218

12.0 @ 119.8 2051

11.3 @ 131.6 205 124 0.99

The Road Test Summary does not appear in each issue, but you can always find the most current version (and over 250 data panels) at roadandtrack.com/data.

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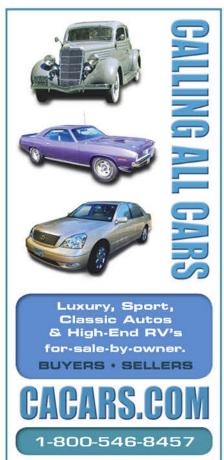






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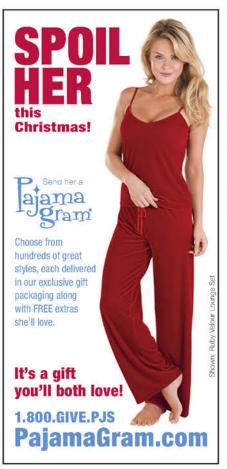




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by BOB LUTZ

NEED HELP? HELL YEAH, YOU DO. WHY NOT ASK THE WORLD'S MOST OUTSPOKEN CAR GUY?

Dear Bob,

I can't help noticing that most mainstream new cars come in any color you want, as long as it's black, gray, dark red, or maybe blue. What gives? Where are the pale yellows, rich browns, and periwinkles of yesteryear? Our roads are turning into drab pigeon coops.

EDWARD SCHIFF, Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin

An astute observation—you're absolutely correct. Blame depressing conformity on the public and the dealerships that place the orders. The designers at car companies always propose two or three new colors, some of which are standouts, like the gorgeous dark-gold/metallic-cognac color that I've seen on a current Explorer or two. But lack of demand is almost always the death of great new colors, so the designers, disappointed, have to tweak the grays, silvers, whites, and blacks again. You do find interesting colors like yellow, metallic orange (used on my personal Camaro), plum, and acid green on cars like the Mustang, Camaro, Challenger, and Corvette. The rest of the market is 50 shades of gray.

I love my Pontiac Solstice; good job on that one. With stickier tires and some light engine work (mostly better breathing), I turned it into quite the little rocket. Why didn't the factory go that route? Cost? Target market? Just curious, not criticizing.

WARREN BULLWORTH, Richmond, Virginia

We didn't because we had the 260-hp turbo engine on offer for the high-performance fan. Almost any production engine can be improved with so-called blueprinting, which includes careful matching of parts, weighing all components, removing excess material, and choice polishing and honing. But it's not feasible when producing an engine every two seconds, as GM does. Tires: We mounted all-seasons, which satisfy most of the people most of the time. Switching to dedicated summer tires always improves handling, but don't try winter driving with them. A racing

compound takes it to the next level, but with serious trade-offs in tire life and wet grip.

How do the Koreans offer those huge warranties? I've driven their cars. They don't seem like they'd churn out 100,000 trouble-free miles. Am I wrong, or is there a business case for what they do?

Dana Grady, Columbus, Ohio

It was a marketing strategy to overcome what was at the time a horrible reputation for quality. It worked! And I have no doubt that the average new Hyundai or Kia will complete 100,000 miles without breaking a sweat (or a part), as will

just about any new car these days. For 200,000 miles of trouble-free motoring, I'd put my faith in many of the high-volume brands instead of premium makes.

As a man of taste and vision, which cars currently on sale do you think will be collectible in 25 years? If you could stash, say, five 2014–2015 models in a barn for later, what would those be?

PAUL GUZMAN, Portland, Maine

That's a tough one! My taste and vision are often not shared by others. Leaving aside the McLarens, Paganis, and Veyrons of the world, what you want to look for is unusually good design (sometimes "unusual" is enough) and a somewhat-limited production run, for whatever reason. Extreme high performance helps make a car collectible. Here's what I'd buy and quietly let appreciate in a cool, dry place:

- 1. 2014 BMW i8
- 2. 2014 Chevrolet Camaro Z/28
- 3. 2015 Chevrolet Corvette Z06
- 4. 2014 Cadillac CTS-V Wagon
- 5. 2015 Jeep Wrangler Unlimited

I realize this is a bit GM-centric, but you did ask for my list! The Wrangler is on there because it's a guzzling icon, soon to be replaced by something likely smaller, lighter, daintier, and, of course, more efficient.

Bob Lutz has been The Man at several car companies, so your problems are cake. Bring 'em on.





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